

Egypt says no to Israeli chicken

CAIRO (R) — Egypt has banned imports of fresh and frozen chicken from Israel out of fear that the poultry is carrying the Newcastle virus, a statement published in the government Al-Ahram newspaper said Wednesday. It said Trade and Supply Minister Ahmad Jueily told authorities to take preventive measures to prevent the entry into Egypt of Israeli chicken. The Egyptian trade office in Brussels was informed by the European Union that Israeli chicken was found with the Newcastle virus, the newspaper said. There was no further information on chicken imports from other countries. Since the beginning of this year, Britain, for example, has had at least 11 cases of Newcastle disease, an acute viral disease of poultry.



Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية مستقلة تصدر عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية "الراي"

Clinton invites Israeli president to Washington

TEL AVIV (AFP) — U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright Wednesday invited Israel's dovish President, Ezer Weizman, to visit Washington next month. During a speech at the outset of her visit to try to rescue the Mideast peace process, Ms. Albright turned to Mr. Weizman and transmitted the invitation from U.S. President Bill Clinton. She said the visit would take place in early October. Mr. Weizman, whose position has traditionally been largely ceremonial, has angered the right-wing government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu with a series of diplomatic initiatives over the past year to save the peace process. He notably met with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and speaks regularly with Israel's two main partners in the Arab World, His Majesty King Hussein and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

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Albright starts rescue mission of peace with pro-Israeli statement

Such one-sided approach, wholly committed to the Israeli side, will not be conducive to an evenhanded mission — Ashrawi

Combined agency dispatches

U.S. SECRETARY of State Madeleine Albright Wednesday launched a mission to rescue the collapsing peace process with a strong statement of support for Israel's security and no mention of halting settlement building and expansion.

Speaking at a meeting with Israeli President Ezer Weizman, Ms. Albright backed Israeli demands that the Palestinian National Authority crack down on Islamists. "We are with you in the battle against terror and the struggle for security," she said.

"We are with you in your insistence that the Palestinian [National] Authority fulfill the responsibilities and obligations that it has undertaken."

Palestinian security officials said Wednesday that since last week's bombing in Jerusalem, they have arrested more than 100 suspected Islamists, including 15 overnight.

An aide to Mr. Netanyahu dismissed the new detentions as cosmetic and merely a gesture to Ms. Albright.

She later met with Mr. Netanyahu and his top diplomatic and security aides.

The secretary said Wednesday that in her meetings with Mr. Netanyahu, she would stress the need for "mutual responsibility and a new sense of partnership."

That was an indirect reminder to Mr. Netanyahu that Mr. Clinton's administration wants Israel to pull back its troops in the West Bank, as promised, and to carry out the remaining issues in the interim peace accords.

An Israeli official who spoke on condition of anonymity said Ms. Albright's comments were "very satisfying for Israel."

She was due to meet Mr. Arafat Thursday in the West Bank city of Ramallah and then see Mr. Netanyahu again that night.

Another round of separate talks with the two was possible Friday before Ms. Albright heads off for visits to Syria, Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, officials said.

Ms. Albright addressed indirectly Palestinians' insistence that the crisis can be resolved only if Mr. Netanyahu returns to the land-for-peace principles, which had underpinned the peace process launched four years ago under U.S. auspices.

"In the coming days and meetings with Mr. Netanyahu and other leaders, I will have much more to say about the peace process and the need for mutual responsibilities and a renewed partnership," she said.

"Although we are very much focused this week on the question of security, we also know that the path to real security is not separable from the path to real peace," she said.

But she made no mention of Jewish settlement building on occupied lands, which sparked the current crisis six months ago nor of Mr. Netanyahu's decision to freeze further troop

withdrawals from the West Bank following the recent bombings.

Palestinians say such measures have all but destroyed hope that the peace process will achieve their goal of creating their own state.

"I feel that such a one-sided approach, wholly committed to the Israeli side, will not be conducive to an evenhanded mission," complained Hanan Ashrawi, a minister in the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) government, of Ms. Albright's speech.

In the Palestinian-run West Bank city of Nablus, protesters burned the U.S. flag and a caricature of Ms. Albright wearing a Star of David necklace.

"This protest is a message that America's policy of bias towards Israel will only bring destruction back to this region," said Salim Khilla, one of the organizers.

Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said the U.S. must ensure implementation of agreements and restore faith in the Israel-PLO accord signed at the White House on Sept. 13, 1993.

"If an agreement signed at the White House can be buried by an Israeli government, then what will be the fate of any agreement in the future?" said Mr. Erekat.

He said that for Ms. Albright's mission to succeed there must be a freeze on Jewish settlement building and a pledge by Israel to go forward with promised troop withdrawals in the West Bank.

Israeli officials said they expected the U.S. to propose a freeze in building of Jewish settlements, including the Jewish settlement project on Jabal Abu Ghneim in Arab east Jerusalem.

An Israeli TV report said the proposed freeze was 45 days, an offer the Palestinians were likely to turn down.

The visit, Ms. Albright's first to the region since becoming secretary of state eight months ago, comes as the peace accords signed four years ago this week in Washington are unraveling.

Political contacts are stalled, Mr. Arafat refuses to make mass arrests of Islamists, and Israel says it won't turn over any more land until he does.

Mr. Netanyahu is expected to propose moving immediately to talks on a permanent settlement and discussion of the most sensitive issues such as Jerusalem.

Palestinians view this as an attempt to get out of a pledge to make further land concessions.

The Israeli daily Maariv reported that Ms. Albright will propose "a new code of conduct" to end recriminations and a "political safety net" to guarantee Israeli withdrawals by mid-1998 if a permanent settlement is not reached.

En route to Israel, the first stop on a difficult, week-long trip, Ms. Albright told reporters she would insist that Mr. Netanyahu commit

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Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright talk, Wednesday. The two leaders met for more than two-and-a-half hours. Tomorrow Ms. Albright meets Palestinian President Yasser Arafat (Reuters photo)

Albright slated to address Palestinians through radio

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was slated to address the Palestinian people directly over the Palestinian National Authority's official radio station during her peace-making mission which began Wednesday.

"We have agreed in principle on this unprecedented broadcast, but Ms. Albright's crowded schedule might interfere with the timing," said Bassam Abu Sumayah, director of the official Voice of Palestine radio.

Officials at the U.S. consulate in Jerusalem confirmed that Ms. Albright

hoped to reach out to the Palestinian public via the radio on Thursday as part of her effort to help revive the faltering peace process between them and the Israelis.

Ms. Albright arrived Wednesday morning for three days of talks with Israeli and Palestinian leaders whose relations have plunged into crisis since the right-wing government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu came to power 15 months ago.

On her arrival Ms. Albright said a key to reviving the peace process was renewing the sense of "mutual responsibility"

and partnership between the two sides and she has scheduled a series of unusual events to take this message beyond political leaders and directly to the people.

After meeting Wednesday morning with Israeli President Ezer Weizman, Ms. Albright visited Jerusalem's recovering in a Jerusalem hospital from wounds suffered in Palestinian suicide bombings.

She was also scheduled to visit with schoolchildren both in Jerusalem and the Palestinian-run West Bank city of Ramallah to tell them of the importance of peaceful coexistence.

Palestinians say Israel hiding information on bombings

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Just hours before U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright arrived in Israel, Israeli troops rounded up another half-dozen suspected activists on the West Bank, Palestinian sources said.

The arrests, in the Israeli-controlled villages of Dura and Dahiriya near Hebron, came as Israel continues to hunt for those behind two bombings in Jerusalem over the past six weeks. Also on Wednesday, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) accused Israel of hiding evidence that the assassins in the last two Jerusalem bombings came from abroad.

Israel is withholding the information in order to pressure the Palestinians into carrying out mass arrests of suspected Islamists in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the official Voice of Palestine radio quoted Tayeb Abdul Rahim, the secretary general of the PNA, as saying.

Opposition lawmaker urges Arafat to accept final status talks

RAMALLAH (AP) — Yossi Beilin, one of the leading architects of the Israeli-Palestinian accords, urged President Yasser Arafat in a meeting Tuesday to accept any proposal to enter talks on a final peace settlement with Israel.

Mr. Beilin said he travelled to the autonomous West Bank town of Ramallah "to tell [Arafat] that if there is an U.S. suggestion" to accept Prime Minister Netanyahu's offer for final status talks, "please take it."

Mr. Beilin and Mr. Arafat agreed that the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and Israel's Labour Party, now in opposition, would sign a document promising to continue the peace process.

The document will be signed next week, on the fourth anniversary of the signing of the first peace accord, Mr. Beilin said. The signatory for Israel

will be Leah Rabin, wife of the Israeli leader who was assassinated in 1995 by a Jewish extremist who opposed the peacemaking.

Under Mr. Netanyahu, who was elected last year, the gradualist approach of that accord has faltered. Mr. Netanyahu has suggested a quick negotiation for a final peace settlement instead, but Mr. Arafat has demurred, apparently fearing there was no chance of achieving his goal of an independent state with Mr. Netanyahu.

There is speculation that U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who arrives Wednesday, will propose a package including the resumption of final status talks.

Mr. Beilin said that even if Mr. Arafat feels that Mr. Netanyahu does not sincerely desire to reach a settlement, the "dynamic of negotiation" was important could yield results.

Lebanese army open fire at Israeli helicopters, warships

SIDON (AFP) — The Lebanese army fired at Israeli helicopters and warships near Lebanon's southern coast at dawn Wednesday, Lebanese police said.

Lebanese soldiers deployed between Jiye village and the port city of Sidon, 40 kilometres south of Beirut, opened fire with heavy machineguns on the helicopters flying over the coast at low altitude, the police said.

At the same time, Lebanese artillery shot dozens of mortar rounds at Israeli ships near the coast.

Lebanese newspapers said Wednesday morning that an Israeli attempt to land had been thwarted by the Lebanese army.

Military experts said the Israeli movements were on-site training aimed at eluding the Lebanese army.

Despite a low media profile, the Lebanese military played a leading role in the failure of the Israeli commando operation in southern Lebanon last Friday in which 12 Israeli soldiers died.

Lebanese anti-aircraft artillery on the coast between Sidon and Tyre, 80 kilometres south of Beirut, hampered the advance of the elite Israeli unit landing at Insarrah and of Israeli helicopters sent to assist.

The Israeli soldiers were killed in mine explosions and clashes with Lebanese soldiers, Hizbollah guerrillas and fighters of the Amal militia.

Israeli troops, Hizbollah guerrillas clash in south

MARIJAYOUN (AFP) — Violent clashes erupted on Wednesday evening between Hizbollah guerrillas and Israeli troops inside the self-declared Israeli security zone in south Lebanon occupied since 1985, security officials said.

Anti-tank rockets and automatic gunfire rained over the border area near the Lebanese village of Hula at around 8:30 p.m., followed by an exchange of mortar fire, the security officials said. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

A spokesman for the Islamic Resistance, the military wing of Hizbollah, said that a commando unit of its "special forces" ambushed an Israeli foot patrol near the Lebanese-Israeli border.

"Our fighters fired at the enemy patrol only a few metres away," the spokesman added.

On Friday, 12 elite Israeli troops were killed after being ambushed during a bungled raid in south Lebanon.

Hizbollah, Israel start negotiating on remains

BEIRUT (R) — The leader of Hizbollah group Wednesday said it was negotiating the exchange of Lebanese prisoners held by Israel for body parts from 12 Israelis killed in a botched commando raid. "Negotiations started a few days ago," Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, 38, said at his headquarters in Beirut's southern suburbs. "The channel which is mediating at the moment is the ICRC [International Committee of the Red Cross]. We have not closed the door on other channels."

"We prefer that details of

this operation remain behind closed doors for the best interest of captives, prisoners and the deal as a whole," he said in an interview.

Israel holds an estimated 50 Lebanese prisoners inside its own borders and another 125 indirectly at Khiam prison inside the strip of south Lebanon it occupies with the aid of its client Lebanese militia, the south Lebanon army. Hizbollah guerrillas are fighting to drive Israeli forces out.

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UNRWA to cancel part of austerity measures

By Ghaila Alul
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — After securing \$19 million in special grants from donor nations and covering its \$20 million deficit, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) Wednesday decided to cancel part of the austerity measures which have recently induced feelings of anguish and uncertainty among Palestinian refugees.

Although the contributions, pledged to the agency during a two-day meeting for donor nations in Amman, covered the agency's \$20 million budget deficit, it did not cover the real \$70 million budget gap of which about \$50 million were reduced by the austerity measures.

UNRWA still faces a difficult task of enlarging its donor base and increasing



Peter Hansen

its donor contributions to prevent any further budget deficits which could lead to further service cut-backs.

"There is no reason for rejoicing at the long-term. We cannot relax our efforts in any way, we still have to work very hard with the host countries to make sure that we can maintain UNRWA on fine financial foot," UNRWA Commissioner General Peter

Hansen told reporters in a press conference on Wednesday.

Mr. Hansen said that among the austerity measures lifted were those that imposed charges on UNRWA school students and froze hospital reimbursements and referrals.

But other measures are still in force which include the 15 per cent reduction in international staff and the suspension of recruitment of additional teachers.

According to a statement by UNRWA, the agency would continue to provide scholarship subsidies for existing recipients. Under current funding projections, however, it would only be possible to finance new scholarships if special additional funding was secured.

During the two-day meeting, Japan announced that its annual pledge

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U.N. draft to help make up for Iraqi failure to sell oil quota

UNITED NATIONS (R) — A resolution was circulated in the Security Council Tuesday to enable Iraq to sell its full \$2 billion quota of "oil-for-food" in the 180 days that began June 8 while accommodating its failure to sell \$1 billion worth in the first 90 days ended September 5.

The resolution, drafted by the U.S., Britain and France and citing humanitarian considerations, was expected to be adopted Wednesday or Thursday. This will depend on discussions dur-

ing council consultations scheduled for Wednesday.

Under the resolution, the first 90-day period would be extended to 120 days, until October 5, giving Iraq another month in which to sell the approximately \$432 million worth of oil it failed to sell by September 5.

The resolution, however, also reduces the second 90-day period to 60 days, during which Iraq must sell the second \$1 billion quota.

Under the "oil-for-food" programme that went into effect last December, Iraq is

allowed to sell \$2 billion worth of oil every six months — in equal \$1 billion quotas every 90 days — to buy humanitarian supplies to offset the effects of sanctions in force since its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Iraq sold only about \$568 million worth in the first half of the 180-day period that began June 8 after refusing to sell any oil until the U.N. had

(Continued on page 7)

Iraq destroying chemical weapons, U.N. envoy says

MANAMA (AFP) — Iraq has begun destroying its chemical weapons and has agreed to disclose the secrets of its germ warfare programme, U.N. disarmament envoy Richard Butler said Tuesday.

"Destruction of weapons, relating to chemical warfare is taking place in Iraq," Mr. Butler said at a news conference in Manama, the rear base for the U.N. Special Commission on Disarming Iraq (UNSCOM) which he heads.

The arms "were identified some time ago, but there was a problem in the destruction process," he said, adding "the agreement has now been reached and destruction is now going on."

"We will expect Baghdad to give us a full, final and complete declaration on this soon," Mr. Butler said. He also said Iraqi missiles parts were being eliminated.

"We have recorded significant progress in special missile warheads area. We have identified the destruction of almost all of them including those imported from the former Soviet Union," he said.

"The total number of SCUD (missiles) was recorded as 819," he said, adding "the number of those not yet accounted for is very small — less than 10."

Earlier Tuesday in Baghdad, Mr. Butler said: "The Iraqi government will hand over to UNSCOM today or tomorrow, within the next 48 hours, their full, final

Gulf officials to discuss Iraq

KUWAIT (R) — Gulf Arab foreign ministers will review Iraq's compliance with U.N. resolutions and the Middle East peace process at an upcoming meeting in Saudi Arabia, the official Kuwaiti news agency KUNA said Tuesday.

It quoted Gulf diplomatic sources as saying the foreign ministers of the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) due to meet in the southwestern Saudi city of Abha Sunday would also discuss "positive developments" in Iraq's stand towards its Arab neighbours.

"Among the most prominent topics on the agenda of the... [meeting] is to review the extent of Iraq's compliance with international resolutions linked to its aggression against the state of Kuwait, and the United Nations efforts to destroy weapons of mass destruction it possesses," KUNA said.

The head of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) on Iraq said after talks with Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz Tuesday that Iraq would hand to the U.N. a full declaration on its germ warfare programme in the next 48 hours.

UNSCOM must certify that Baghdad has no weapons of mass destruction before the United Nations lifts curbs on Iraqi oil exports imposed after Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

and complete declaration on Iraq's past biological weapons programme."

The Iraqi report, covering some 800 pages, "is something we have waited for," Mr. Butler said.

"It is important and it will mark an important occasion, which is what I will be able now to say to the [U.N.] Security Council that all full, final and complete disclosures have been lodged with UNSCOM."

A U.N. oil embargo imposed after the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait can only be lifted when

UNSCOM certifies that Baghdad has dismantled all weapons of mass destruction and banned arms programmes.

But UNSCOM has in the past voiced dissatisfaction with "full reports" from Baghdad on other arms programmes.

While working to eliminate Iraq's chemical and nuclear programmes and its long-range missile capability, UNSCOM has said that accounting for Iraqi stocks of the deadly agents Anthrax and VX remains its main outstanding concern.

UNSCOM experts have said the amount of the agents produced in Iraq was four times more than enough to kill the world's entire population.

In August 1995, Iraq admitted to filling warheads with biological agents. A month later, Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz said that if his country had come under nuclear attack in the 1991 Gulf war over Kuwait, it would have retaliated with biological weapons.

Mr. Butler, emerging Tuesday from a final session of talks with Mr. Aziz, said the discussions between their two delegations had been "vigorous... very direct, and very frank."

"We focused in particular on the results of the work programme" which was agreed during his last visit in July.

"And we are very satisfied with some of the results that we have obtained, in particular in the missiles and chemical weapons areas," said Mr. Butler, adding however that more work remained in both fields.

He said their talks were also centred on "special warheads that were produced in the past, possibly filled with chemical and/or biological agents."

"We had a well-focused discussion on how many warheads were there, what did they contain and where are they now. And we made good progress in that area," the Australian diplomat added.



CLOSURE STILL ON: An Israeli Border Policeman on Wednesday checks the back of a Palestinian at an Israeli checkpoint outside Jerusalem. U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright arrived the same day in a bid to revive the Middle East peace process after two suicide bombings in central Jerusalem since late July left 20 Israelis dead (Reuters)

S. Arabia blames Israel for deadlock

ROME (R) — Saudi Arabia's defence minister blamed hardline Israeli policy Tuesday for stalling the Middle East peace process and called for a halt to "stupid actions" that harm both sides in the dispute.

"Before [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu's government, the process was going with wisdom and with serenity both on the part of the Israelis and Palestinians," Prince Sultan Ben Abdul Aziz told a news conference.

"Before, we used to talk about peace for the territories. Now instead, Netanyahu talks about security in exchange for peace."

He added: "I launch an appeal to Israel on the part of Saudi Arabia to put an end to those stupid actions which hurt both them and the Palestinians." He did not specify which actions he meant.

Prince Sultan met Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi earlier in the day to discuss bilateral ties and the peace process, which ground

to a halt in March after Israel began work on a Jewish settlement project in Arab east Jerusalem. "We are against terrorism and killing but the fight for one's country is not a deplorable action," Prince Sultan said.

"We are against those who want to destroy Israel and we ask Israel not to destroy Arabs [in the occupied territories] and to give them the rights they're entitled to."

Both he and Mr. Prodi pledged to work towards "a just and global peace."

Israel looking for culprits in grave desecration

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli police are searching for extremists who left a pig's head near the grave of a 1930s Palestinian leader, a police spokeswoman said Tuesday.

The pig's head was left near the grave of Izzeddine Al Qassam Sunday to express anger over last week's Jerusalem bombing which was claimed by the Izzeddine Al Qassam Brigade, Hamas' military wing named after him.

An anonymous caller to Israel Radio claimed the act for a Jewish group named "Hagai."

Police spokeswoman Shlomit Minkovsky told the Associated Press Tuesday that police had not previously heard of the group and were investigating.

Al Qassam was one of the leaders of the Arab revolt against the British rulers of Palestine in the 1930s. After his death, he became a mythical figure for Palestinians.

The desecration of the cemetery was condemned by the mayor of the northern Israeli town of Neshet, where it is located.

"For all these years, we have protected the Muslim cemetery, and in the future too, we will prevent any attempt to harm the graves at the site," Mayor David Omer was quoted as saying by the Haaretz daily.

U.S. rights group warns against extradition of Saudi bomb suspect

DUBAI (AFP) — The U.S.-based Human Rights Watch appealed Wednesday to U.S. legal authorities not to extradite to Riyadh a Saudi citizen suspected of links with the 1996 Dhahran bombing.

The rights group urged the Justice Department not to deport or extradite Hani Abdul Rahim Sayegh, in a letter to U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno, a copy of which was faxed to Agence France Presse.

Saudi Ambassador to Washington Bandar Sultan Ben Abdul Aziz Al Saud said Tuesday that his country has requested Sayegh's extradition after Washington decided to drop charges against the 28-year-old Saudi.

The Justice Department said on Monday steps are

underway that could result in Sayegh's leaving the United States.

"In the event that the Saudi authorities establish that all of the requisites for extradition are met... the United States would respond appropriately to the Saudi request," it said.

The department has asked a judge to drop charges filed against the Saudi suspect when he arrived in the United States. The judge was expected to rule on Wednesday.

Sayegh, deported from Canada in June, is suspected of having conducted reconnaissance in the eastern Saudi city of Dhahran before a truck bomb killed 19 U.S. soldiers at the U.S. housing complex on June 25,

1996.

In a deal which fell through, he was to have faced lesser charges of involvement in earlier anti-U.S. attacks in the kingdom that were not carried out, in exchange for information on the Dhahran blast.

But on July 30, he pleaded not guilty to terrorist activity and has refused to cooperate with U.S. authorities.

Sayegh has said he was in Iran at the time of the Dhahran attack, and denies belonging to the Saudi Hizbollah movement. He has called himself a political dissident and voiced fears for his life if sent back to his country.

Three Israeli Knesset members arrive in Egypt in attempt to release convicted spy

CAIRO (AFP) — Three Israeli MPs arrived here late Tuesday to hold "informal" talks with the president of the Egyptian parliament to seek the release of an Israeli Arab imprisoned in Egypt for spying for the Jewish state.

"We hope that tomorrow, after tomorrow or some time this week we will meet Mr. Srour or other Egyptians to talk, but it will be personal talking," Raanan Cohen, parliamentary leader of the opposition Labour Party, told Agence France Presse.

Mr. Cohen was accompanied to Egypt by the parliamentary chief of the ruling Likud Party, Meir Shtrik, and Labour Deputy Avi Yehezkel.

Mr. Cohen said he wanted to keep the level of talks with the president of Egypt's People's Assembly, Ahmad Fathi Srour, "very quiet and friendly."

"I have known Mr. Srour for many years, we will talk about a lot of things, including this thing which is an issue in Israel. It will be a friendly talk, not formal," Mr. Cohen said.

Mr. Cohen was referring to Azzam Azzam, an Israeli Druze who was sentenced last month in Cairo to serve 15 years in prison with hard labour for spying.

"We will see if somebody can help," Mr. Cohen said.

(IPU) conference which begins a five-day meeting in Cairo on Thursday under Mr. Srour's chairmanship.

An Israeli parliamentary official said earlier in Jerusalem that the MPs would ask for Azzam's release during a scheduled meeting with Mr. Srour.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in repeated public statements and phone calls and a letter to President Hosni Mubarak, said the verdict was entirely unjustified and that he would "do everything" to obtain Azzam's release.

According to the Israeli newspaper Haaretz, Mr. Mubarak sent Mr. Netanyahu an angry letter last week accusing him of using the case to curry

favour with Israel's 80,000-strong Druze community. The Druze sect is an offshoot of Islam.

Mr. Mubarak said Mr. Netanyahu's statements had put him in a tough situation, implying that the Israeli leader's high-profile actions had made it more difficult to consider a possible pardon for Azzam.

"You are not the only one confronted by public opinion," he was quoted as saying, asking Mr. Netanyahu and his aides to halt their public criticism of the Egyptian judicial system.

Relations between Israel and Egypt, which signed a peace treaty in 1979, have deteriorated since Mr. Netanyahu came to power last year.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:10Ovide and the Gang
14:30The New Fred and Barney
15:00America's Funniest People
15:30He Shoots He Scores
16:30Shingalana
17:00French Programmes
19:00News in French
19:15French Programmes
19:30News Headlines
19:35Trivial Pursuit
20:00Parenthood
20:30Lois and Clark — Superman
21:10King Fu
22:00News in English
22:30Feature Film
23:15Step By Step
23:59End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

04:53Fajr
06:12(Sunrise) Dhuha
12:32Dhuhr
16:05Asr
18:53Maghreb
20:12Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swiffeth, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.
Terra Sancta Church Tel.

JORDAN VALLEY

20/33

Anglican Church Tel. 652826.
Armenian Catholic Church
Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church
Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel.
771751.
Armenian International Church
Tel. 5516245.
Evangelical Lutheran Church
Tel. 824328.
German-speaking Evangelical
Congregation Tel. 688404.
The Latter-Day Saints Tel.
654932.
Church of Nazareth Tel.
675691.
The Evangelical Local Church
in Amman Tel. 811295.
English-speaking
Latin Catholics Parish Tel.
614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
It will fine with temperatures lower than average by three degrees centigrade and winds northwesterly moderate to active. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate to active and seas calm.

Amman14/28
Aqaba22/34
Deserts15/31

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Mukles Mazahreh 820425
Dr. Wisam Hazyin748563
Dr. Munther Al Khathib839888
Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayim630115
Firas pharmacy661912
Ferdous pharmacy778336
Al Asena pharmacy637055
Nairoukh pharmacy623672
Al Salam pharmacy636730
Yacoub pharmacy649495
Shmeisani pharmacy637660
Najib pharmacy847632
IRBID:
Dr. Ghazi Ta'ameh250080
Al Quds pharmacy(—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Salah Safrini987565
Khalifeh pharmacy985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre637111
Civil Defence Department661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue630341

Civil Defence Emergency

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade617101
Blood Bank775121
Highway Police843402
Traffic Police896390
Public Security Department630321
Hotel Complaints605800
Price Complaints661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints897467
Amman Municipality Complaints787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)121
Overseas Calls010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs661101
Jordan Television774111
Radio Jordan680100
Water Authority815615
Jordan Electricity Authority636381
Electric Power Company813813/32
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Husseln Medical Centre813813/32

Khalidi Maternity

644281/6
Al-Jalil Maternity, 643441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital669131
University Hospital845845
Al-Muasher Hospital6672279
The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen777101/3
Al-Bashir,775111/26
Army, Marica891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital602240/50
Amal Hospital674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery665199
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital09/883323
Zarqa National Hospital09/900560
Ibn Sina Hospital09/86732
Al Hiloma Modern Hospital09/990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital02/275555
Greek Catholic Hospital02/272275
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital02/247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200 where it should always be verified.
Information on other flights are supplied on phone 08 (52700) or 08(53250).

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
08:05Sanaa (RJ)
09:45Bombay (RJ)
10:05Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
10:20Bahrain (RJ)
10:35Beirut (RJ)
10:40Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
10:40New Delhi (RJ)
11:00Colombo (RJ)
15:25New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:05Moscow (RJ)
17:30London (RJ)
19:10Athens (RJ)
19:20Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)
19:45Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (RJ)
23:35Doha (RJ)
Other Flights
11:00Al 'Arish (add) (PF)

13:25London (RJ)

18:00Doha (RJ)
21:20Laranga (RJ)
21:25Jeddah (RJ)
22:00Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:15Cairo (RJ)
22:25Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)

Other Flights

04:00Athens (QA)
06:15Istanbul (TK)
08:45Beirut (ME)
08:50Amsterdam (GA)
09:10London (BA)
13:00Al 'Arish (add) (PF)
14:30Riyadh (SV)
14:45Bahrain, Abu Dhabi (GF)
15:30Annaba (Algeria) (AF)
15:30Al 'Arish (add) (PF)
17:00Rome (AZ)
21:00Tel Aviv (LY)
22:00Cairo (MS)
02:30Amsterdam (KL)
08:45Beirut (ME)
10:00Dubai (EK)
10:25London (BA)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
06:45Beirut (RJ)
07:20Moscow (RJ)
09:10Kuwait (RJ)
11:35Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (RJ)
11:55Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:10Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
12:20Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
12:45Amsterdam, Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
13:15Paris (RJ)
13:20Athens (RJ)

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Her Majesty Queen Noor Wednesday visits a school and meets with a mother and her young child during her tour of the Ma'an governorate (Petra photo) *

Queen Noor tours Ma'an Governorate, villages

AMMAN — Her Majesty Queen Noor Wednesday toured the governorate of Ma'an, where she visited the Ma'an Government Hospital, several Ministry of Social Development institutions, and schools, according to a press release Wednesday.

As a follow-up to His Majesty King Hussein's visit to Ma'an last month, Queen Noor inspected the facilities of the Ma'an Hospital and concentrated on the maternity, gynaecological, and children's wards, the statement continued.

At the Dar Al Hanan for orphaned and abandoned teenage girls, the Queen and the Minister of Social Development Mohammad Khair agreed that the institute would be relocated to Amman as soon as possible to enable the young girls to be closer to their extended families, the statement read.

Queen Noor also met with the members of the Society for the Care of the Disabled, which looks after children suffering from cerebral palsy and audiological problems. The Queen, who is honorary president of the Cerebral Palsy Foundation, reviewed the society's plans for a comprehensive cerebral palsy centre, which is named after HRH Prince Firas Ra'ed and is financed by the Industrial Development Bank and the Japanese embassy, according to the statement.

The centre, which will open soon, will provide boarding facilities for severely disabled children, a department for early diagnosis of disabilities and audiological problems, as well as classrooms and a professional care unit for the children, the statement said.

In Hashimiyah, the Queen also visited the Queen Noor Welfare Society, inaugurated in 1990, and, as part of Al Ilm Noor Student Relief programme, the Hashimiyah Primary Schools for Girls and for Boys, the statement continued.

Queen Noor expressed her pride in their work, which she said King Hussein and their family enjoy in their own home, as well as give away as important presents. She also met with the Hweitat's two Peace Corps volunteers, who have been living in the village for the past month to help in marketing and product development. Al Hweitat rugs have won an award at an international carpet exhibition in Atlanta and have attracted tourists, who come to the centre to buy the hand-woven products, the statement read.

Queen Noor was accompanied by King Hussein's Health Secretary HRH Prince Firas Ra'ed, Minister of Social Development Dr. Mohammad Khair Mamsar, Al Ilm Noor Fund Coordinator H.E. Mrs. Salwa Damen-Masri, Secretary General of the Ministry of Education and of Health, NHF Executive Director and Ma'an's Directors of Education, Health and Social Development, the statement concluded.

Three men released on insufficient evidence after serving five years

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Due to lack of evidence, the State Security Court Wednesday ordered the release of three men who had served five years after being convicted of drug possession and trafficking.

Nayef Salem, 39, Hisham Musa, 42, and Midek Suleiman, 55, originally were sentenced to prison terms ranging from seven to ten years with hard labour by the State Security Court last September.

The three were detained by

authorities in December 1993.

Their case was reviewed by the Court of Cassation, which referred it to the state court for revision because of contradictory evidence that was presented by the state prosecutor.

In its ruling, the State Security Court, headed by Judge Yousef Faour, stated that "after re-examining the case, we order the release of all three defendants for lack of evidence."

Meanwhile, the same court Wednesday began hearing the case of four men who are

accused of smuggling drugs and firearms from Syria since 1990.

Hassan Awad, 27, Hussein Raja, 21, Mohammad Muteir, 51, and Askar Odeh, 45, pleaded not guilty to charges of importing illegal arms and drugs, and possessing and trafficking drugs.

Until they were arrested in April 1997, the group allegedly managed to smuggle and sell M-16 rifles, machine guns, ammunition, and narcotics.

The court tribunal set Sept. 16 to start hearing the prosecution witnesses in the case.

Weeklies' compliance with press law 'still under scrutiny' — minister

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Information has not decided to close any of the weekly tabloid papers, as reported in the local press, but the status of the papers is still under scrutiny, Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi said Wednesday.

During a meeting with editors of newspapers and heads of information departments, Dr. Mutawi said the Press and Publications Department is studying each tabloid's documents, as submitted by the proprietors, to determine their compliance with the Press and Publications Law and its amendments.

The government amended the law last May, requiring each weekly paper to have a registered capital of JD300,000, and each daily to have a registered capital of JD600,000.

Dr. Mutawi said failure to enforce the Press and Publications Law in the past had encouraged the weeklies to act in an irresponsible manner.

Last month, the Press and Publications Department sent notifications to the 18 weekly papers demanding reports on their financial

accounts by the end of August 1997.

Speaking on the dialogue with the opposition political parties, the minister said the dialogue did not fail and the door was still open for all groups and representatives.

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali has already met twice with Islamist groups boycotting the 1997 elections, and has also conferred with representatives of the National Constitutional Party and opposition groups which did not declare a boycott.

On Ibrahim Ghosheh, the spokesman for the Hamas resistance movement who was arrested Sunday, the minister said Mr. Ghosheh was detained for questioning in connection with his statement, which Dr. Mutawi said was considered harmful to national security.

He said Jordan would never be party to an alliance directed against an Arab state.

"If there are any manoeuvres in the region that could harm the security of an Arab country, Jordan will adopt stands dictated by the Kingdom's national commitments," he explained.



Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi Wednesday discusses the issue of the weekly papers' compliance during a meeting with newspaper editors (Petra photo)

Referring to the Cairo summit meeting, attended by the leaders of Egypt, Jordan, and Palestine, Dr. Mutawi said the meeting was for an exchange of views and coordination of positions prior to the visit by U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

He expressed hope that the U.S. secretary will bring positive ideas to give impetus to the peace process and re-establish confidence among the concerned parties.

Dr. Mutawi discussed a plan for restructuring the Ministry of Information and

disclosed that work is underway to create a media training institute to train cadres in media-related affairs.

The institute would offer training to Jordanians and personnel from other Arab and friendly states, he concluded.

Princess Basma receives delegation of Islamic scholars

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Wednesday received a delegation of Jordanian Islamic scholars scheduled to leave for Cairo Friday to study Egyptian expertise in the fields of family planning, development, and population.

Princess Basma voiced her happiness that women have the opportunity to join the delegation, stating that women are now an essential part of the Jordanian community.

Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Abbadi said plans for promoting development cannot be fulfilled if they do not stem from Islamic beliefs.

The delegation includes

as members the ministry Secretary General Abdul Fattah Amin, the National Population Commission (NPC) Secretary General Nabih Salameh, Mufti of the Armed Forces Mahmoud Shwayyat, Dean of the University of Jordan's Faculty of Sharia Mahmoud Sartawi, Chief Justice Office Director General Issam Arabiyat, Dean of Princess Alia Community College Samira Khawaldeh, Member of the Islamic Action Front Shura Council Nawal Faouri, as well as other members of the Armed Forces and the Public Security Department.

The visit is organised by the NPC in cooperation with the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs.

Representative to Palestinian areas leaves for Gaza

AMMAN (J.T.) — The head of Jordan's Representation Office in the Palestinian Self-Rule Areas Ziyad Majali left Amman Wednesday for Gaza after attending the meetings of donor nations and Arab states hosting refugees, which ended Tuesday.

The meetings resulted in the donor nations pledging over \$23 million in special grants to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), helping the cash-strapped U.N. organisation cover its immediate \$20 million budget deficit through 1997.

Before his departure, Mr. Majali said the meeting was successful, both politically and financially.

The donor nations seem to have realised the serious political implications, had UNRWA failed to offer its services to the refugees, he said.

During the meeting, which reviewed UNRWA's 1998 and 1999 fiscal budgets, Japan pledged \$12.6 million, the U.S. \$7.5 million, the Netherlands \$1 million, Germany \$1 million, Italy announced \$900,000, and Spain \$300,000.

Mr. Majali said Jordan pointed out the dangers that may have swept the region should UNRWA have went ahead with its austerity programme in its fields of operations. Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip.

Referring to future budgets, he explained that the delegates agreed to pursue the task of securing sufficient funds for the agency during the upcoming meeting of the U.N. General Assembly, in order to avoid another deficit.

Majali concludes conference; travels to Sudan for joint talks

SANAA (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Wednesday concluded a three-day visit to Yemen and arrived in Khartoum for a two-day visit to Sudan, where he will attend the Higher Jordanian-Sudanese Joint Committee meeting.

The meeting is scheduled to cover bilateral relations, the current peace process, and other issues of common concern.

Prior to his departure from Sanaa, Dr. Majali and his Yemeni counterpart Dr. Faraj Ghanem signed a number of agreements and protocols on several topics designed to bolster bilateral ties.

The two sides reached understandings in the several fields.

In the political field, both parties expressed concern over the dangers facing the Middle East peace process, resulting from the Israeli government's current policies, and demanded that Israel abide by U.N. resolutions and commit to a comprehensive peace.

They noted the arbitrary Israeli measures and collective punishment levied against the Palestinian people, saying such measures tend to increase the dangers in the region.

They were disturbed by current attempts to transform the Red Sea and its littoral regions into a zone of conflict, which threatens international trade and regional maritime operations.

The two sides also expressed dismay over the embargo on the Iraqi people, continuous since 1990, and demanded that the sanctions be lifted to avert further suffering.

Finally, they expressed concern over the continued military confrontations in Sudan and Somalia and the massacres taking place in Algeria, and voiced support for all efforts to end the conflict in these three Arab states.

In finance, both parties voiced satisfaction with the ongoing "cooperation" in trade and economic matters, and endorsed measures to fully implement a 1995 trade agreement.

They expressed their desire to establish a free-trade zone, and willingness to submit draft plans for this zone at the next higher committee meeting.

In investment, a protocol was signed on technical cooperation between the Jordanian and Yemeni investment promotion corporations.

In the private sector, both nations encouraged the private sectors to embark on joint ventures and coordinate their contacts for promoting the exchange of products.

In industry, the committee agreed on training Yemeni cadres in Jordan and on despatching Jordanian experts to Yemen to train personnel in industry-related matters.

In taxation, customs, and planning, the two sides agreed to take steps to prevent dual taxation and implement a memorandum of understanding on customs issues, and Jordan expressed readiness to provide specialists in planning.

In energy, concerns, the committee agreed to speed up the implementation of an electrification project in Yemen by providing Jordanian expertise and training. It was also agreed to con-

vene a meeting by a joint technical committee on gas and oil to reactivate bilateral cooperation in this field.

In agriculture, the committee pledged to implement a 1995 agreement to encourage the two private sectors to embark on agricultural projects and to prepare lists of products that will be exchanged.

Jordan will supply Yemen with 15,000 olive tree saplings and 5,000 apple tree saplings, and will provide expertise in marketing agricultural products and in forestation projects.

In contracting and urban development, both parties agreed to establish a technical committee to develop plans for cooperation in these fields.

Jordan will train Yemeni personnel and send specialists to assist in urban development fields.

In transport and telecommunications, the two sides agreed to implement earlier accords on land and maritime transport.

Jordan proposed to conduct maintenance on Yemeni civil aircraft.

The Kingdom will send a team of experts to help install and maintain telecommunications facilities.

In health, the two sides signed a protocol on cooperation in health-related domains.

Yemen will register Jordanian-made drugs and allow Jordanian pharmaceuticals to be marketed there.

Jordan and Yemen also agreed on measures for cooperation in social security, social affairs, judiciary, awqaf and Islamic affairs, sports and youth, education, and vocational training.

WHAT'S GOING ON

LEBANESE ART FESTIVAL

* Musical performance by Lebanese signers at King Abdullah Gardens, Thursday and Friday, at 8:30 p.m.

FILMS

* "Cronica del Alba" (ep. II) at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman, Thursday, at 5:00 p.m.
* "The Man Without a Face" at the American Centre, Abdoun, Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Works by Ali Al Yazbiki at the Jordan Plastic Art

Association, Jabal Weibdeh, until Sept. 16.

* Fourth Pottery Exhibition by Mahmoud Sadiq and Da'ad Al Mufleh at Hamurabi Gallery, Gardens Street, until Sept. 19 (Tel. 5536098).

* Paintings exhibition entitled "La Radioactive" at the French Cultural Centre, until Sept. 30.

* Paintings by Palestinian artists entitled "Palestine the Reality and the Dream" at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, until Oct. 2 (except Tuesdays).

* Bani Hamida exhibition (rugs, cushions, runners, wall hangings and baskets) at Al Baidar Hall of Kan Zaman, until Sept. 20.

New outlet opens

AMMAN (J.T.) — Under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Rania Al Abdullah, Jordan River Designs (JRD) opened its new outlet at Reem Al Bawadi Restaurant, according to a press release Wednesday.

The restaurant, which opened in June 1997, attracts many local and foreign visitors. The products displayed by JRD are all hand-made and complement the Arabic tradition of the restaurant, the statement continued.

JRD is continuously seeking to expand its local market, thus helping women living in low-income areas increase their family income, and as a result improve their living conditions and those of their children, the statement concluded.



Policemen loyal to Bosnian Serb President Biljana Plavsic stand guard at the entrance of the Hotel Bosnia in Banja Luka. Bosnian Serb hardline leaders, loyal to former leader Radovan Karadzic, claimed they were being held hostage in the hotel after it was surrounded by police loyal to President Plavsic. The group included Momcilo Krajisnik, the powerful Serb member of Bosnia's inter-ethnic presidency and Prime Minister Gojko Kljickovic (Reuters photo)

Calm returns to Bosnian Serb town after stand-off

BANJA LUKA, Bosnia-Herzegovina (AFP) — Calm returned to this Bosnian Serb town Wednesday after a tense stand-off between rivals in the Serb camp brought North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) peacekeepers directly into the fray in the Serbs' on-going power struggle.

A spokesman for the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR), which rescued a group of hardline Serbs cornered in a Banja Luka hotel Tuesday, said peacekeeping troops were patrolling the area but the town was "very calm."

"It is very calm, SFOR is patrolling," the spokesman, Mark Croxford, said. "It's our job to maintain a stable environment." The group of 78 Bosnian Serb politicians, staff, special police officers, actors and businessmen from the hardline camp were bussed out of the area in the early hours of Wednesday after spending some time at a nearby SFOR camp, Mr. Croxford said.

Among those who fled the Hotel Bosnia, running the gauntlet of an angry mob held back by police, were senior Bosnian Serb leaders Momcilo Krajisnik, the Serb member of Bosnia's tripartite presidency, and Bosnian Serb Prime Minister Gojko Kljickovic. It is also believed that Dragan Kijac, the former Bosnian Serb interior minister left the hotel but this could not be confirmed. Kijac was sacked by Biljana Plavsic, president of the Serb-run half of Bosnia, and has an arrest warrant out for him.



A British SFOR peacekeeper guards Bosnian Serb hardliner Ljiljana Peric as she displays three-fingers, a Serbian Orthodox salute in Banja Luka. Bosnian Serb hardline leaders, loyal to indicted war criminal Radovan Karadzic, claimed they were being held hostage in the hotel after it was surrounded by police loyal to President Biljana Plavsic (Reuters photo)

The western-backed Ms. Plavsic and the hardline camp have been locked in a bitter power struggle since July. The rivalry was sparked after Ms. Plavsic accused opponents loyal to her predecessor and indicted war crimes suspect

Radovan Karadzic of widespread corruption. The stand-off in Banja Luka Tuesday marked a humiliation for the Karadzic faction, who U.S. officials in Washington accused of planning a coup against Ms. Plavsic. "This is tantamount, real-

ly, to the second coup attempt by the Pale clique in recent weeks," said State Department spokesman James Foley, referring to the hardliners' mountain stronghold in the east of Bosnia.

The first attempt was in August when NATO troops found a huge illegal arms cache at the Banja Luka police headquarters.

This week's events have threatened local elections seen by the Western Community as a turning point for the war-ravaged country. International officials continue to insist the election will be held though privately many acknowledge that the chances of having the vote are diminishing.

The elections, already delayed three times, are crucial since they will decide who will wield control over the local governments throughout the country and oversee the return of refugees.

The senior Western representative in Bosnia, High Representative Carlos Westendorp, said Tuesday: "These elections have to take place."

"It is in the peace agreement and all the international Community has invested a lot of money... \$14 million" in organising the elections Saturday and Sunday, Mr. Westendorp said.

However, besides the tensions in the Serb-run half of the country, a further shadow was cast over the polls Tuesday by the announcement in the southern city of Mostar that the main Bosnian Croat party, the HDZ, had called on all Bosnian Croats to boycott the vote.

Fighting erupts in Mazar-e-Sharif as Afghanistan's Taliban close in

KABUL (AFP) — Armed clashes erupted in the Afghan opposition bastion of Mazar-e-Sharif Wednesday as Taliban fighters advanced into the city limits with the aid of local supporters, independent sources said.

Aid workers based in the city said heavy fighting has erupted to the south and east, where commanders supporting the militia have linked up with Taliban forces.

"Soldiers on the streets say the fighting is in the outer limits of the city and against both Taliban and local commanders," an aid source said.

The sources said the local turncoat commanders were from the fellow ethnic-Pashun Hezb-e-Islami faction, who also began similar revolts to the west of the city.

Unconfirmed reports said two locally employed aid workers were killed in the fighting, senior aid sources said.

"The fighting sounds like it is constantly getting close-

er, but we are all sitting tight and not leaving our compounds. All the roads leaving Mazar are cut," said a Western aid worker based there.

Vehicles belonging to British, German and Swiss aid groups were stolen, and the offices of the United Nations and a French relief group have been ransacked in the ensuing chaos, the aid source said.

All United Nations and Red Cross flights to the city were suspended during the day, making an evacuation of humanitarian staff impossible.

The Taliban have occupied about two thirds of the country since seizing the capital Kabul in September last year. Mazar-e-Sharif is the last major city still under opposition control.

Ethnic Uzbek warlord, Abdul Malik quit the city on Tuesday following an internal power struggle within the anti-Taliban alliance, Western sources said. The row saw armed clashes on the city's streets.

"There are no Malik

troops on the streets, it's all Hezb-e-Wahdat, Harakat-e-Islami and Masood soldiers," another aid source added.

The two Shiite factions are part of an opposition alliance with former government commander Ahmad Shah Masood fighting the Taliban militia on several fronts in Afghanistan.

In May this year, Mr. Malik briefly joined forces with the Taliban to oust ex-communist general Abdul Rashid Dostam, allowing the militia a triumphant entry into Mazar-e-Sharif. But when the deal over power-sharing broke down, Mr. Malik rejoined the opposition alliance and helped expelled the Taliban in heavy street battles, while Mr. Dostam sought refuge in Turkey.

But since the series of defections, sources in the north say relations within the alliance — particularly with the Shiite factions mostly responsible for expelling the Taliban — have been severely strained.

On Sunday, a commander

from Hezb-e-Islami switched sides and handed the Taliban control of Tashkurhan, 40 kilometres east of Mazar-e-Sharif.

The turncoat allowed the Taliban to advance from an isolated northern enclave and march towards Mazar-e-Sharif.

Mazar-e-Sharif — situated about 310 kilometres north of Kabul — is also the seat of government for the beleaguered alliance, which has been battling to end the Taliban's hold on the capital.

The advances come as the United Nations special envoy for Afghanistan, Lakhdar Brahimi, arrived in India for talks on the conflict. Mr. Brahimi, an Algerian diplomat, held meetings with senior Indian officials.

New Delhi does not recognise the Taliban regime and instead extends its support to the deposed Afghan president, Burhanuddin Rabbani, who took office after the Mujahadeen overthrew a Soviet-backed Afghan government.

Scotland poised to vote 'yes' to home rule

EDINBURGH (AFP) — Scotland is poised to vote overwhelmingly Thursday in favour of creating its own parliament for the first time in 300 years, although doubt remains whether electors will give the assembly the power to levy taxes.

If the latest opinion polls are to be believed, Edinburgh will soon have a 129-member assembly with legislative powers covering areas such as health, education, justice, culture, while the issue of whether it will have power over taxes is too close to call.

Nearly three centuries after the Treaty of Union between England and Scotland and the disappearance of the last parliament in Edinburgh in 1707, the decision will transform the British political landscape.

Since Sunday, the major political leaders have been campaigning intensively in Edinburgh, Glasgow and other major Scottish centres, after the bid to win voters was suspended following the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Prime Minister Tony Blair has appealed to the Scottish electorate to seize the opportunity with a double "yes" vote to the two questions which will be asked in Thursday's referendum. The first covers the creation of a parliament; the second whether the body should have tax-varying powers. Both questions must be approved by at least 50 per cent.

"There is nothing to be frightened of in this change. It is a good change, it is a right change," Mr. Blair insisted in an effort to overcome the lingering reservations over whether the parliament should have the power to raise or lower taxes by three per cent compared with the British rate.

Industry chiefs argue that granting control over taxes to the proposed body could reduce the competitiveness of Scottish industry.

The Scottish branch of the confederation of Scottish industry has expressed serious reservations.

For Mr. Blair, "no" to the second question would take some of the shine off his handling of one the most significant constitutional changes in Britain in three centuries.

Mr. Blair had made devotion one of the main planks of his election campaign ahead of his landslide victory at the beginning of May.

British royals receive support; Diana driver confirmed as drunk

LONDON (R) — Britain's royal family, reeling from criticism that it was slow to mourn and honour Princess Diana, has received support from comments by Diana's mother that there was no disagreement with the queen over her funeral.

Meanwhile in Paris, police sources said post-mortem tests on the driver in Diana's fatal crash confirmed that he had not only been three times over the legal alcohol limit but had also taken anti-depressants before setting out.

The report was a blow to those seeking to lay the blame for Diana's death at the feet of the motorcycling paparazzi photographers who were pursuing her car at high speed, and their newspaper clients.

The other target of public reproach, the royal family, received some comfort from a Mori poll in the Sun tabloid in which 73 per cent still backed them, although 39 per cent felt less favourable towards them since Diana's death.

The family had been quick to deny a potentially damaging report that, after Diana died, Queen Elizabeth had initially insisted she be given a private funeral.

Diana's mother, Frances Shand Kydd, asked that the families of Diana's sons, Prince William and Prince Harry, "be sustained in our loving hopes and prayers for these two brave boys."

In a statement, she insisted: "There is no division, nor has there been, between their paternal and maternal relations. Grief has no agen-

da or timetable."

Channel Four television news said Monday that the queen had only relented under ferocious pressure from Diana's ex-husband Prince Charles.

Buckingham Palace issued a statement dismissing the story as "a ragbag of nonsensical speculation."

In Paris, a source close to the police inquiry into the crash said new tests on the body of the chauffeur, Henri Paul, showed he had not only drunk the equivalent of two aperitifs and a bottle of wine, but had also taken anti-depressants shortly before driving.

The source, who asked not to be identified, told Reuters the drugs could have boosted the debilitating effect of the alcohol.

Lawyers for Mohammad Al Fayed, father of Diana's companion Dodi Al Fayed who also died in the crash and owner of the Paris Ritz Hotel where Paul worked, have argued a reckless chase was the real cause of the crash.

Nine of the photographers who pursued Diana are being investigated for possible manslaughter charges.

William Bourdon, lawyer for SIPA agency photographer Nicolas Arsov, told Reuters after Paul's alcohol level was confirmed: "It's definitely clear now that the intoxication of the driver and the consequences — this crazy speed — was the unique and fundamental cause of this accident."

Police sources denied reports that the car had been filmed by a surveillance

camera showing it speeding at 196 kph, saying the camera was not equipped to record images or measure speed. Investigators believe the car was moving at 150 to 180 kph.

A spokesman for the Al Fayed family said he had not seen the latest blood test but certainly condemned drunken driving.

"If Mr. Paul is culpable, Mr. Mohammad Al Fayed will be the first to condemn him, because he has lost his eldest son and a very dear friend," spokesman Michael Cole told Reuters.

Thousands of people flocked to the rural Althorp estate after seeing the first pictures of Diana's resting place on an island where she used to play as a child. Diana's brother, Earl Spencer, appealed to people to stop bringing flowers in the hope of adding them to the blooms on her grave.

Even three days after Diana's funeral, thousands were still adding their flowers to a sea of bouquets at her London home, Kensington Palace.

Meanwhile officials from the royal household were getting to grips with the task of removing the estimated one million bouquets left at various London palaces.

Most of the flowers will be used as compost in the palace gardens but tens of thousands of notes, poems and messages will be collected and passed on to Diana's family.

Australian scientists develop natural fungicides

CANBERRA (R) — Australian scientists have developed gene technology using native flora which could reduce the use of chemical sprays and improve crop yields.

The process, which combats crop fungi, is in its testing stage. While the technology is not new, the use of native Australian flora, and the genes that result, is a first.

Scientists are using derivatives from native plants to produce small proteins, or peptides, which kill or repel fungi. The peptides are inserted into the genetic material of crop plants, such as tobacco, making the plants resistant to attack from fungi.

In future, the scientists might use the peptides in a spray to replace conventional chemicals.

"The beauty of this is that it is a completely Australian

technology — based on the distinctive plants which have evolved in our environment over millions of years," said Dr. John Manners, researcher in Tropical Agriculture for the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO).

Two of the peptide genes have been cloned from the Macadamia Nut which, being highly accessible, has enabled the scientists to mass produce the peptides for testing.

The researchers are also experimenting with transferring the cloned peptide genes into vulnerable crops to provide protection against fungal attacks.

Laboratory testing has so far found nine peptides to act against the five main groups of fungi known to attack grain and fruit crops. "We have transferred genes to tobacco and canola

plants experimentally," Mr. Manners said.

"Our next step will be to see how active they are against a range of fungal pests. The good news is that (the compounds) appear to be absolutely harmless to humans and animals."

"Within a very short time period, one or two years, we will know how effective this (technology) is going to be, whether it is going to be commercially viable in grain and fruit crops," he said.

"The longer term applications would involve developing these peptides as fungicides in their own right or investigating possible clinical uses."

Damage to crops in Australia from fungal attack costs growers millions of dollars each year. Citrus growers say they lose about 10 per cent of their crops each year, costing them

about \$A18 million annually.

According to John Irwin, director of the co-operative research centre for Tropical Plant Pathology (CRC), the technology has generated enormous interest in both the scientific and business worlds. CRC is a partnership between the CSIRO, universities and government departments.

CRC is seeking and meeting potential licensees from major seed companies to cover patent and further research costs in exchange for exclusive testing and use privileges.

A CRC official told Reuters that a large multinational company, which they declined to name, would enter into evaluation agreements for testing the technology. The firm had agreed to pay international patent costs during the evaluation stages.

Search abandoned for 10 people in Norway air crash

OSLO (R) — Rescue crews looking for 10 people missing after a helicopter crashed into the sea off northern Norway two days ago said Wednesday they were calling off the official search.

A massive operation, involving up to 15 vessels, three helicopters and surveillance aircraft was launched early Monday when a Super Puma helicopter disappeared during a routine flight from Broennoyssund to the Nornø Oilfield.

Two bodies were recovered later Monday along with the wreckage of the helicopter's rotor blade and fuselage.

"We have now searched a very large surface area extensively and come up with nothing," Finn Bjørnar Hansen, spokesman for the Central Rescue Centre at Bodø, told Reuters.

"We are left to speculate that the 10 people missing are still on board the helicopter. And it is at the bottom of the sea."

Mr. Hansen said the official search, which had been hampered from the start by poor weather conditions, would be called off at 12 noon local time (1000 GMT) Wednesday.

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Flaw in temporary laws

THE RECENT decision to lift the ceiling on foreign ownership of Jordanian companies and enterprises, except in a few select areas, is controversial on two fundamental grounds.

First the amendments to the law that would allow foreign ownership up to 100 per cent was enacted in the form of a temporary law. The Constitution stipulates that the government should not resort to temporary laws except when there is an emergency or a pressing need that cannot wait till Parliament has an opportunity to consider them. Yet there appears to be a growing pattern to legislate in the form of temporary laws even when it is clear that there is no sense of urgency to do so. There was nothing to prevent the government from waiting till Parliament is in session to introduce the necessary amendments especially when they are of a nature that calls for deeper reflection. We can comprehend the possible economic benefits of such a change in our national laws, but the issue of foreign ownership and participation in national businesses requires a sober analysis which we cannot presume has been duly done in the absence of full parliamentary debate.

Second, and equally troublesome, is the flawed rationale behind the controversial amendments. If the purpose is to invite foreign capital to the country to beef up local industry and commerce, then we should have opted for another path to accomplish this goal. As is, foreign capital is entering the country to invest in already prosperous businesses and enterprises and not in those which are ailing and in dire need for monetary transfusions. The national economy does not stand to profit if the weak sectors in the economy become weaker and the healthy ones stronger and more prosperous.

The fact that the amendments are reflected in a temporary law should provide us with another opportunity to test their validity against the backdrop of "clinical evidence," which would surely surface in the upcoming few weeks and months. Armed with a wealth of data and information, the next Parliament would be in a sound position to reconsider all temporary laws and act on them with hindsight.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Arab Al Yawm discussed U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's mission in the Middle East and said the U.S. secretary is called upon to try to show Washington as a fair broker between the Arabs and Israel. The Arabs do not expect Washington to side by the Arabs, but they do hope that the U.S. will adopt a policy that would at least achieve the minimum level of justice between the two sides, said Saleh Qallab. Ms. Albright has to realise that the Arabs in this area do not trust the United States as a peace broker because of its unlimited backing for Israel's aggression and its continued occupation of Arab lands, noted the writer. He said that this feeling can be changed if the U.S. manifests readiness to bring about the minimum justice required by the Palestinians, helping them to regain their usurped territory and end Israel's occupation. The writer said the U.S. secretary should tell Benjamin Netanyahu that there can be no security for Israel without a meaningful peace and that Israel is bound to face continued resistance in Palestine and southern Lebanon because of its occupation and its aggression. The Arabs, said the writer, feel that through Israel's aggressive policies, which are backed by Washington, the U.S. is losing credibility and its image is that of a power that supports aggressors and terrorists.

A WRITER for Al Ra'i reflected on the summit meeting in Cairo, grouping the leaders of Jordan, Palestine and Egypt, and stressed that the communiqué issued after the meeting was a clear message to the United States and its secretary of state who is now visiting the Middle East that they should revive the peace process. Mahmoud Rimawi said that through their summit, the Arab leaders who are directly concerned with the Middle East peace process have expressed the desire of "the peace camp" to reach a comprehensive peace and reiterated their total opposition to all acts and forms of terrorism and violence which harm the peace process. The leaders should call on Israel to abide by the peace accords and stress that their clinging to the peace option should be understood in Washington and reflected in Ms. Albright's efforts in her current tour of the region, said the writer. Describing Ms. Albright's visit as significant, since it comes at a crucial moment and follows ample preparations, the writer said that the U.S. secretary ought to exert serious efforts in Israel to overcome all obstacles to peace, and be a fair peace broker, determined to help this region enjoy security and peace.

View from Academia

What should be done and by who to revive Mideast peace

By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

ON THE occasion of the long-awaited visit to the region by U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, one cannot but think about the status quo of peace in the troubled (and troubling) Middle East and about what ought to be done to put the process of peace making back on track.

Things are not that easy, of course; but they ought not to be that difficult either. The Arab-Israeli conflict has its own peculiarities and complexities, no doubt. But basically conflicts among nations are not that much different from family squabbles or friction among colleagues at work: it only takes a degree of selfishness or indifference to the wishes, wants or needs of others to create a big problem and spoil the lives of the many involved; and it only takes a small degree of common sense to bring peace and harmony to all.

In the Middle East of today, Israel bears almost the sole responsibility for the chilling selfishness and indifference to the fate of the peace process and the fate of the many peoples in the region who have suffered long and who have long wanted to put the past behind and live and let live. The present Israeli government is so narcissistic in its vision (assuming that it does have vision) that common sense seems to be entirely absent from its present stance vis-à-vis peace with the Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese.

Who is to put some sense into the mind of the present Israeli government, and how?

First, and most effectively and speedily, it has to come from the Israeli government itself. There has to be a readiness on the part of the Israeli government to engage more fruitfully and less selfishly in the process of peace. As has been underscored repeatedly since Madrid, there is no victory or defeat in peace; peace is a mutual, collective (not individual) concern, and there has to be a substantial degree of altruism, compromise and sacrifice to reach it. The Arabs (Egyptians, Jordanians, Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese) have either done enough in regards to altruism, compromise and sacrifice or showed enough willingness and readiness to do so. The ball is in the Israeli court now.

It is never too late for the Israeli government to put the interests of its own people (and the peoples of the region) above all other narrow and secondary considerations. Reports about Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy's threat

to resign if the Israeli premier does not change his position and strategies regarding peace and about Israeli Public Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani's call for the formation of a national unity government to rescue the peace process (reports which clearly signify that the Israeli government itself is obstructing peace at present) are encouraging. Finally, enough pressure from within the Israeli government itself may happen to convince the headline Israeli premier of the necessity of living up to peace commitments, if he himself does not come to such realisation.

The Israeli public may also want to increase the pressure on its government to live up to the challenges of the times and to respond to peace opportunities more open-mindedly. Not all Israelis approve, relish and cherish the way their present government is handling (mishandling?) peace making, and they are thus called upon to act more actively and effectively in pressing their government to succumb to their will. It is, short term as well as long term, in the interest of the Israeli people to live in peace with their neighbours. This is the best guarantee not only for Israel's security but also, more importantly, for its welfare and prosperity.

Second, if the Israeli government and the Israeli public do not do enough to make peace a reality, the U.S. has obviously a more active role to play than it has in the past few months. Who else is qualified to convince, persuade or pressure the Israeli government to implement the peace agreement with the Palestinians and to conclude agreements with Syria and Lebanon? After all, the U.S. is the one and only superpower; it is also Israel's strategic ally, the patron of the peace process, and the country with the biggest and most important interests in the Middle East region.

Many people, by way of arguing that America cannot do much with respect to coercing Israel, have been emphasising the power of the pro-Israel Jewish lobby in America, a lobby which they see as dictating almost all the U.S. Middle-Eastern policy on the U.S. administration. While there is some truth to this line of thinking, there is also the counter truth that the U.S. is not Israel. As was seen clearly several times during the Bush administration and President Clinton's first term in office, the U.S. can have a strong, independent policy vis-à-vis the Middle East, a policy which is not dictated by Israel and its supporters in

America.

Add to this the fact that the U.S. does so much for Israel (has done so much for Israel since the latter's creation) that Israel cannot survive without America's support. This clearly entitles the U.S. — more so than even Europe — to exercise pressure on Israel. We hope and expect the U.S., for the sake of its own interests and for the security (and prosperity) of all its friends in the region, to exert enough effort to influence the course and cause of peace more dramatically than it has done in the past few months.

But, third, what if the U.S. does not do enough on its own? What should the Arab countries (especially those directly involved in the peace process) do? So far, the Arab World has been doing essentially two things: a) condemning Israel's elusive stand regarding Mideast peace and b) calling on the international community, the U.S. or Europe to pressure Israel to implement the peace agreements. This is basically it.

What about the role of the Arab World itself in this respect? Well, at this level, not much is happening. So far, the Arab World is, and continues to think of itself as being, at the receiving end of things. The Arab countries do not see themselves as powerful enough and capable enough of making a difference on their own.

This is clearly unacceptable. The Arab countries are called upon, during these critical times, to wear themselves from reliance on others and to start thinking of tactics, strategies, actions, ways and means of influencing events in the region. If the Israeli government can do it, the Arab World can do it. The Arab countries hold so many cards in their hands, and they can (in subtle and diplomatic ways) make their presence more strongly felt.

At this point in time, the Arab countries look more like supplicants than anything else, and beggars, as the English saying tells us, cannot be choosers. Whether the change of heart regarding peace comes from Israel itself or through pressure on it by the U.S. and others, or it does not come, the Arab World ought to be more assertive and active than it has been so far. It has to play a role that is distinctly its, and it has to stop relying on others to do things for it. I hope in the days to come (sooner than later), through closer and more serious coordination and consultations among the Arab brethren, we prove that we can make a difference.

Turbulent Africa — conflict resolution should be done the African way

By John Gay Yoh

SEVENTY YEARS of political dawdling is quite a long time for African nations. It is true that much has been achieved, but more is needed to be done. Compared to the short time it took the continent to pull out of the European political domination, a considerable political transfiguration has been indeed achieved. In cultural adjustment for example, the African culture was able to impose itself, positively of course, on almost every rule in the universe. But in economic terms, the region still lags behind. Even in this field one is optimistic, with the hope that the hidden treasures will be exploited. But again, a lot has to be done.

While the rest of the world passed beyond the ideology era, Africa seems to be in pains trying to fit itself in the new set up. With the new world order, the new myth — international community — has imposed itself and evolved enormous power which allows it to interfere in everything, anywhere and any time. The world became so small that it has become difficult for, say, an African leader to quarrel privately with his or her minister, let alone keep a leader's filing for divorce a secret.

Next century will certainly introduce a hard millennium for Africa. I think that a conflict resolution programme should therefore become the priority of African leaders.

Few years ago I read a piece in a Ghanaian magazine about a quarrel over a chicken at a market in northern Ghana, in February 1994, which led to that nation's bloodiest tribal conflict since independence. As a result of the fighting between the Konkombas and other tribal groups, some 6,000 persons died, over 15,000 were displaced and 200 villages were destroyed. Somehow the Ghanaians managed to calm down the situation. There is no doubt that tribalism is and has always been a main threat to the stability of many African nation

states. Tribal conflict has almost become part of the African political culture. Thus, it is "natural" to hear that killings are going on in Sudan, Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, Angola, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Congo and in several other countries. Given the nature of violence in present day Africa, it is unfortunate to note that the mechanisms for conflict resolution in "African tradition" have lost their impact and, most of the times, outsiders are invited in to attend to the peace-making business. And since these outsiders have very little knowledge, if any, of the cultural make-up of the continent, the result is more chaos.

"It is quite true that there is 'something African' about Africa that can never be Japanese, Chinese, European or American. It is this 'something African' that would make an argument over chicken a tool for the death of thousands of people, and yet the problem was solved in the African own way."

Although it is sometimes understandable that conflicts cannot be easily avoided, it is also true that a conflict should not be accompanied by violence. People may avoid violence by resorting to preemptive measures: in Africa's case, for example, using traditional effective means such as long-term alliances within a single tribe or with the neighbouring tribes.

With the interference of the outsiders, world public opinion has acquired "legitimacy" to have a say in what is happening in Africa or, for that matter, anywhere else in the world. However, while the same headlines of the civil wars in Rwanda and Somalia were read all over the world, the "international community" response, as represented by G7, the U.N., OAU and NGOs, has been, to say the least, inadequate in terms

of providing urgent solutions to these problems. African initiatives were, at the same time, discouraged or totally ignored.

When an immediate political solution was needed, the "international community" remained passive, without any quick solution to offer besides mobilisation of relief and food. Appreciated though it is, it has become bothersome to see these relief activities take precedence over the urgent need to find lasting political solutions or adopt preventive measures which, I think, are more important in order to avert political armed conflicts in the region.

In fact, some would go as far as saying that the

African Republic — and thus save the lives of thousands of civilians who died as a result of negligence.

The volatile situation in Africa should be a real concern for African leaders first and foremost and it calls for an immediate action. There is a need, I think, to create space for a talk-free environment — a breathing space for discussion and openness among African leaders.

Africans and those involved in peace making in Africa need a political will to search the root causes of the unsettled conflicts, be they religious, tribal, ethnic, political, social or economic. As a matter of fact, an African approach to conflict resolution, buttressed of course by other conventional approaches, needs to be pursued.

It is quite true that there is "something African" about Africa that can never be Japanese, Chinese, European or American. It is this "something African" that would make an argument over chicken a tool for the death of thousands of people, and yet the problem was solved in the African own way.

I tend to take the view that sending an envoy of the secretary general of the U.N. to mediate peace in Africa is no longer a suitable mechanism for African conflict resolution. But suppose President Clinton, President Chirac, President Mandela, Prime Minister Blair, Mr. Kofi Annan, Mrs. Sadako Ogata, the eastern and western African leaders, the heads of the World Bank and IMF came together and tried to bring a solution to all the current African ethnic and religious wars!

How about holding talks with the warlords of Somalia, Sudan and Burundi in an official gathering for instance?

The writer is a visiting fellow at the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies in Amman. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

LETTERS

Self-control, not more taxes

To the Editor:

IT IS ironic that Waleed M. Sadi should use in his Human Rights File an article, "Weddings extravaganzas should be cut down" (Jordan Times, Sept. 8, 1997), to suggest that the government actually limit freedom of expression and freedom of choice by imposing a progressive tax on weddings that he has, self-righteously, determined to be excessively expensive.

Aside from his habitual whining throughout the article concerning other people's weddings, Mr. Sadi actually makes a good point about the ever-increasing social pressures to have extravagant weddings. The answer, however, is self-control, not yet another government tax.

The freedoms that allow people to choose to have extravagant weddings are based on the same principles that allow reasonable freedom of expression in the press, no matter how absurd the article.

Mickey Davis,
Amman.

Living worthy lives

To the Editor:

WHILE CONVEYING my condolences over the loss of the princess of Wales, I would like to also comment on Italian film director Franco Zeffirelli's harsh feelings towards those who are grieving such a loss, as mentioned in a Column 8' item "Zeffirelli slams praise for Diana" (Jordan Times, Sept. 3, 1997).

First of all, it is sad that anyone would die such a horrible death. But to be a person in the public eye and never be able to have privacy, an evening out, a Friday drive, is totally unfair. Yes, perhaps there should have been autopsy performed on all those in the car. But the fact remains that there was a switch in drivers because of "lack of privacy." Being chased through the streets of Paris is hardly a relaxing evening out with one's date.

If Mr. Zeffirelli is most concerned that so many people had Princess Diana up on a perfection pedestal, then maybe his feelings are a little bit justified. But Princess Diana dedicated herself to the good of the people. After divorcing Prince Charles and returning the crown she had every right to become her own person once again. Instead, she continued to serve others, publicly.

It should be everybody's hope to be remembered for having contributed some good to the human race. I wonder how Mr. Zeffirelli wants to be remembered and how he wishes others to grieve over his death some day. May he not be slammed in such a manner as he did Princess Diana.

At a time like this when the world grieves an untimely death, I would hope and pray that people examine their own lives and see how they can improve and correct some of the world's faults. We should all appreciate our lives and live them according to God's expectations.

Tammy Summey,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any issue they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld upon request but only under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing and abridging.

Week
Remov

A star

Society on the Move

Remove your mararah, get rid of your worries

ALL COURTS UNDER ONE ROOF: All justice-related needs can now be obtained in one stop: The Palace of Justice. Ten courts and offices have already moved to the new location including the offices of the Prosecutor General, Attorney General, Higher Court of Justice, Court of Cassation, Court of First Instance, Criminal Court, Amman Criminal Court, Peace Court and others. Administrative Manager of the Palace of Justice, Na'el Raquad, said that since all courts have moved to the new complex, it has become the first of its kind in the Middle East. Citizens and lawyers don't have to travel between distant courts anymore and the facilities of the new building offer practicality and comfort.

JORDAN WINS ARCHITECT AWARD: Jordan won top award of the Arab Ministerial Council for Housing and Construction which concluded its meetings at the Arab League's offices in Cairo last Saturday. Egypt won second award. Engineer Ziad Khayat, who headed Jordan's delegation to the Architect Award panel of judges said that the Arab League had established the award to encourage the preservation of Arab and Islamic traditions in the development of construction in the Arab World. Mr. Khayat said that Jordan, Egypt and Morocco had submitted a project each to the panel which will publicly declare the results and deliver awards at a later date.

DISPUTE AT MINISTRY GOES TO COURT: The quarrel between Minister of Culture Qassem Abu 'Ain and Suhair Tal, the director of conferences, festivals and exhibitions at the ministry ended up with Ms. Tal taking the dispute to court. The minister had revived the dispute after making statements to the media that brought the internal affair concerning participation at a Paris conference on Jerusalem, in which Israel is to participate, out into the open, and as a result, out of house. Ms. Tal, who spoke to Al Arab Al Yom daily, challenged the minister and anyone else concerned with this issue to "divulge the whole truth supported with all the documents that touch on the core of the dispute." Is the brawl behind why her name was dropped from the list of Jordanian delegates to the upcoming University Theatrical Festival in Morocco? She tells the paper: "The minister is the primary decision-maker at the ministry, and he has the right to use his powers as he wishes. I am an employee who executes decisions and orders, but I am protected by a set of laws that preserve my rights and dignity, and protect me from power abuse."

ARAB-ISRAELI BOOK ON SECURITY: Abdullah Toukan and Shai Feldman have jointly published a book entitled Bridging The Gap: A Future Security Architecture For The Middle East. The book contains inclusive history of both Israeli and Arab security perceptions, military strategy, and a visionary, yet very specific, road map of how to build a Middle East regional security regime. The collaborative effort of the Arab and Israeli analysts to bring about the book is a notable achievement. The book is available at the American Resource Centre.

DIPLOMATS GET DISCOUNT BUT ALSO A QUOTA: For those who used to fly instead of drive to neighbouring countries in order to feast at Queen Alia's duty free shop, the JD5 million Duty Free Markets Company is setting up outlets on the King Hussein Bridge, Sheikh Hussein Bridge, Syrian and Iraqi borders to afford every traveller out and into the country the opportunity to stock up on their daily substance requirements and buy fancy gifts at best possible prices. Launching the trend, Issa Ayoub, the general secretary of the Ministry of Transport, inaugurated on behalf of HRH Prince Faisal a duty free shop at the 7th Circle Royal Jordanian terminal last Saturday. In addition to serving the public, the duty free shops will also serve the diplomatic community of Jordan, offering them a whopping additional 12.5 per cent discount on cigarettes and alcohol and 5 per cent on all other products. Ambassadors will be allowed up to \$800 worth of goods a month and other diplomats \$400.

NO MARARAH, NO WORRY: To have your gall bladder (or mararah) removed in the Arab World you become socially immune from anything that could make you angry or frustrated. This is what the doctor prescribed to JTV Director Nasser Judeh a few months back, who did not cash in on the advice until he found himself motionless with excruciating pain Sunday before last. Whether it was a simple case of gallstone or a classical build up of JTV mineral residue, Mr. Judeh found himself in hospital Monday and under the scalpel of a surgeon Wednesday. Unable to keep him in hospital for quality company, he was placed under house arrest till Friday, or that's what the doctor thought. Major surgery or not, 'Abu Tareq' was back at work Monday, totally immune against tension whatever the source may be! Should we expect a change in JTV shows as a result of this? We don't know, but we advise all those who plan to blow his top off, it is virtually impossible now!

AMERICAN CHANGES IN AMMAN: The American Embassy is not exempt from sudden changes, at least as far as telephone numbers go. Jot down their main switch board phone number which was changed to 5920101. Those furthering their English language proficiency or starting from scratch should know that the American Language Centre has moved from the 3rd Circle in Jabal Amman to a location off the 8th circle. A map leading you to the new location is available at the American Resource Centre.

PELLETREAU IS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR NOW: For those who knew Robert Pelletreau from when he served at American embassies across the Middle East, including Amman, and are wondering what he's up to now after completing his service as assistant secretary of state for near eastern affairs which brought him constantly to the region alongside Warren Christopher, he has now accepted a position in the New York-based international law firm of Afridi & Angell which also has offices in Washington, London, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah and Islamabad and associated offices in Amman, Beirut and Cairo. Pelletreau, a resident partner at the law firm, is an established expert on the Middle East and was a member of the U.S. delegation to the 1991 Madrid Middle East Peace Conference. His positions in the U.S. foreign service included Ambassador to Egypt and Bahrain. He has held numerous appointments all over the Middle East and Departments of State and Defence as well. The Jordan Times wishes him well in his new position in the private sector.

NO MORE FORTE GRAND IN AMMAN: Europeans who prefer staying at Meridien hotels versus the Forte Grand will be pleased to know that for the next ten years at least, the Amman-Forte Grand Hotel will be called The Amman Meridien. The hotel owned by the Housing and Hotel Services Company which is chaired by the prominent banker, Zuhair Khoury, signed an agreement with Forte/Meridien Resorts effecting the new name and a series of developments including refurbishing four of the hotel's restaurants, the lobby and furnishing new floors of rooms and training all hotel employees. Peter Cardinal of Meridien-Middle East said that the turnover from Forte to Meridien was done successfully at the Forte in Dubai and that he has over ten years experience in the hospitality industry of Jordan.



PRINCESS MEETS JORDAN'S CHAMPIONS: Jordan's athletes who clinched 40 medals of which 8 were bright gold at the Pan-Arab Games were Tuesday rewarded by HRH Princess Haya, the president of the Jordanian International Athletes League. The Princess lauded the athletes' achievements highlighted by the gold medal win in soccer, the most popular sport in the Arab World. Princess Haya met with the athletes and listened to issues hampering their better preparation. Athletes noted that they received little or no financial support and some like triple medalist Ayed Khawaldeh were unemployed although the Ministry of Culture and Youth had promised to find them suitable employment opportunities following their achievements at the games. Their great win at the games launched the Kingdom into celebrations with thousands of people taking to the streets in pride.

GET IT IN ORDER BEFORE NOVEMBER: The Ministry of Tourism issued an order to all night clubs to insure their documents are in order before Nov. 31. Five, four and three star clubs are allowed to hire foreign and local artists, while two and one star clubs are only allowed to contract with Jordanians. The strict regulations established by the Ministry of Tourism concerning the hiring of foreign artists at night clubs include submitting a list complete with names and personal information accompanied by signed contracts, acceptance of the Tax Department, Internal Revenue Department, Ministry of Interior for restricted nationalities, the director of the Amman Police Department and director of the Immigration Department before the ministry will issue an approval valid for one month from entry of the artist into the Kingdom. Once in the country, artists are not allowed to perform at other clubs during their stay and must leave the country upon expiry of the permit.

of contributing to the success of the decentralised cooperation policy, applied to the general goals of democratisation within the framework of the Euro-Med partnership concept, and will include speeches and debate on the founding principles of associations, human resource management, developing an association and external relations and partnerships. Organisations interested should contact PROMETHEUS in Paris. Tel: 331-42228861 or fax: 331-42841230.

SEMINAR FOR ASSOCIATIONS IN AMMAN: NICOMED, the Euro-Mediterranean Network of PROMETHEUS-Europe, a non-profit organisation run by volunteers, active throughout the European countries and which is concerned with organisational management issues, will be holding a seminar in Amman on the 20th and 21st of September. The CIVIS-MED '97 seminar will have the goal

SCIENTIFIC NUKING, PEACEFUL ADVICE: For the second time round, Dr. Mahmoud Dweiri, the vice president of Jordan's acclaimed University of Science and Technology has been selected to the membership of the Scientific Committee of the Arab Organisation for Nuclear Energy, based in Tunisia. Dr. Dweiri said the committee functions as an advisory board on the scientific and technical aspects of peaceful nuclear energy applications. Membership to the committee is not a full time job and Dr. Dweiri will continue to fulfill the requirements of his position at the university.

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

A starting point to discuss refugees

Refugees into Citizens: Palestinians and the End of the Arab-Israeli Conflict
By Donna E. Arzi
New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1997

AS WITH all possible solutions to seemingly intractable problems, Donna Arzi's proposal for resolving the Palestinian refugee issue is based on compromise. It will therefore, by definition, leave all parties less than fully satisfied. But before the plan is dissected, combed for injustices, and trashed, its basic premise must be recognised as sound: Namely, that there will not be an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict until the refugee issue is fully resolved in a just and humane manner. As a starting point for resolution, this observation should come as a great comfort to those who have recognised that one of the weaknesses of the (currently stalled) peace process is that it immediately addresses the status of only a minority of Palestinians, i.e., those residing within the occupied territories. Arzi's proposal is viable as it means to a final resolution precisely because in it no part of the Palestinian community is marginalised, with their status "to be negotiated in the future" — a future many suspect may never arrive. Thus the more than four million Palestinian refugees will be pleased to find themselves at the top, rather than the bottom, of the agenda.

Although formal negotiations over the final status of the refugee have been on-again, off-again since the first meeting of the Multilateral Working Group on Refugee Affairs convened in 1992, there have been no agreements on even minor issues. let

alone on questions with as potentially serious implications as the definition of the 1967 Displaced Persons. This book seeks to bypass such epistemological quagmires and instead provide a blueprint for a practical and above all fair resolution to the refugee question.

As the title suggests, "the main thesis of this book is that a permanent and viable solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict must include the granting of citizenship to Palestinian refugees throughout the region," (p. 2) wherever they choose to reside. Choice is a key aspect of the plan, and those who do not return to their homeland permanently are to be granted dual Palestinian citizenship, which would include the freedom to travel to Palestine. Granted such rights to visit their homeland, Arzi envisions that a majority of the refugees will opt for dual citizenship, with their permanent residence in neighbouring Arab states. Her careful estimates for immigration and final settlement, which account for natural growth in population, suggest large numbers of refugees can be absorbed into Lebanon, Syrian, Jordan, and Egypt as well as other Middle East states and a few outside the region, where sizeable Palestinian communities already exist. Given that these families will retain the right to visit Palestine, many will choose to permanently reside in other countries for economic and social reasons.

This is, according to Arzi, precisely what Israelis may find most appealing about the proposal. Given assurances that no massive return of Palestinians will threaten Israel's existence and security, it behooves Israel to adopt a plan that offers a complete and permanent solution to the

Arab-Israeli conflict, rather than one that continuously delays discussion of the most sensitive issues for some unscheduled "future talks." She argues that "Israel would make a pragmatic decision to exchange partial, symbolic return of Palestinians and the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza for the Palestinian and Arab state acceptance of less than full Palestinian return and less than the complete territory they originally sought." (p. 92)

The establishment of a Palestinian state is thus central to Arzi's plan. "If Palestinians have the right to return anywhere," she argues, "it would be to a sovereign state of Palestine." (p. 67). In the absence of such a state, "final resolution of the refugee question is highly unlikely." (p. 3). Furthermore, "Israel must not attempt, other than through the recognition of dual citizenship, to exercise jurisdiction over Jews who choose to remain in the West Bank and Gaza; similarly, the Palestinian National Authority should not attempt the same with regard to Palestinians living in Israel, Jordan, or elsewhere." (p. 116). As long as Israel refuses to grant Palestinians the right to a Palestinian state — including sovereignty over settlements in the territories, which will likely be evacuated — it cannot expect a resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Arzi recognises that "no plan to resolve the refugee question will work without a comprehensive, viable, and bona fide peace that can be carried out in good faith." (p. 83) and herein lie the primary impediments to the implementation of her plan: Palestinians have little cause to trust that Israel would carry out such an agreement in good

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faith. Successive Israeli governments have been consistent in their failure, beginning with the Camp David Accords and continuing with Oslo, to adhere to their promises to halt the construction of new settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories. Arzi recognises this problem, noting that "since 1967, Israel has built about a dozen new, rapidly expanding neighbourhoods for about 150,000 Jewish settlers in what it has defined as East Jerusalem, by extending municipal borders and seizing private property. Although the Arab population in the city is virtually the same size, its expansion is restricted by Israeli policy. Thus, much of the housing in Arab neighbourhoods is, by necessity, 'illegal.'" (p. 41). This policy of continued settlement construction, combined with Israel's failure to adhere to other agreements (such as in plan for redeployment in Hebron), give Palestinians little reason to trust that the Israeli government would carry out a comprehensive settlement on the refugee issue in "good faith."

Such a fundamental obstacle notwithstanding, Arzi's proposal must be commended for its contribution toward the realisation of a final and just solution to the plight of the millions of Palestinian refugees who have been all but forgotten in the current peace process. When Israel is finally ready to work towards a comprehensive resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, books such as this one may provide a starting point for negotiations that could lead to real and lasting peace.

Jillian Schwedler

Crossroads

By Jean-Claude Elias



THE COMPUTER industry has entered a new phase. The number of innovations introduced in the last five to seven years, combined with the processing power that personal computers now offer, have built bridges to other, apparently different technologies. PCs, telecommunications, television, movies, games and music have never been so close to be fully integrated in one, unique device.

In the early nineties, "multimedia" was the hip word to say. The association of images and sound, obtained by using quality screens, sound cards and stereo speakers with a PC helped give a fresh, more versatile profile to the austere machine. Thanks to Internet and other new techniques we are well past multimedia now.

The need for a group of people, a family for example, to access the Internet and together explore its myriad of sites is making regular computer stations unfit for the job. When three or more people sit to watch a Web site, listen to the live music it may channel and enjoy eventual video clips, a comfortable TV room with its large screen certainly is more appropriate than a stiff working desk with a small 14" monitor.

The advent of the DVD, the digital versatile disk, is another reason why you would rather connect your PC to your TV. DVDs are high capacity CD-ROMs that can hold an entire feature film, in high quality digital sound and picture. They are already available in Jordan and are sold for about JD18. It is expected that recordable DVDs will soon appear that will let you save your photo albums and a variety of other sound and image data. They may also completely replace videotapes, music cassettes and audio CDs in the near future.

Most of those who use or have used Internet know that through the Web they can call a normal phone number in the United States or Canada, among other countries. Rates are much lower than what the local telephone company charges for international calls.

Many amateur musicians and most professional recording studios in Jordan are now using PC-based digital systems to record and produce high quality music, in shorter time and with less effort than with traditional analog equipment.

Till now these different faces of personal computing are not smoothly integrated. One of the reasons could be that the industry hasn't yet found the right formula. Analysts say that everybody is actually waiting for the high-definition digital TV to enter our homes before we can see a real, full-scale, friendly integration of computing, audio, video and telecommunications. It may take a few more years, but once it's here, our homes and working places will never be the same again.

Of absurdity, law breaking, sharpness and purity

By Samer Ghaleb Bagaeen



THOUGH IT should by now no longer surprise me to find, hear and read that some of our professionals, writers and intellectuals not only imply, but even dare to instruct us to follow their orders or be damned and face the consequences on our own and at our own risk.

Some of these writers have lambasted us for mourning the loss of Diana, Princess of Wales, telling us that this was a matter of no concern to us. Even worse, they persist in telling us to rather turn our attention to the absurdities that they themselves have been churning for the last 500 years or for as long as they have been living.

They dare to write and preach to us that the issues that they have been raising for an eternity are far more important than the issues that bring us closer to, or even make us a part of the modern world in 1997.

This is not to say that all the issues that had once been raised as legitimate are no longer valid. And even though political issues are of no concern to us on this page, we can say that our political debate lacks the vigour and vision of true modern day politics; sadly, most people are still arguing and talking about the same issues that they were talking about back in the 1950s.

But surely we have moved on since then. Or have we? What we can rightly mourn at this time is the loss of a decent and constructive public debate about all this in our mainstream press and public forums.

At the same time, we can commend the debates that take place on our local electronic bulletin boards and debating forums where it is in most cases the younger generation of Jordanians showing far more awareness of modern day realities than their elder counterparts using the more conventional forums.

One good example of what gets mentioned on this electronic bulletin board is the attempt by the Aqaba Regional Authority (ARA) to change the status of Wadi Rum from a nature reserve to an area with special status. Nearly absent in the mainstream press, it is as if the transformation of Rum into a first class resort by a blessed group of individuals is not a national issue. What right does the

ARA have to fiddle with a national treasure? And what are the local MPs and the nation going to do to stop this mockery?

Let us also mention the school bus drivers who drive as if they had no school-children on board.

We can talk about the school directors and principals who push aside their principles when they hire such seemingly reckless and irresponsible drivers in the first place. We can also question some parents' blind trust in these schools and their drivers to take their children to and from the schools.

We can also comment on the entrance policy practised by some restaurants and coffee shops in Amman where two mature Jordanian males can be denied entry because they do not constitute a family, while two Jordanian teenagers (a male and a female) apparently do constitute a family, and are therefore allowed entry.

Of the world famous franchises now operating in Jordan, the Jordanian franchise is the only one out of a short list, including Amman, London and Madrid, that prevents two males from entering after 8 p.m. because they are males (there is enough here to attempt a discrimination law suit), and it is the only one out of the three that opens into the early hours of the morning to operate as a discotheque.

But maybe this is how all of these things should be if they are to take on a truly Jordanian identity: The perfect example of law breaking honoured, and purity punished.

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, September 11, 1997

2:00 Holy Koran
2:10 Ovide And The Gang
2:30 The New Fred And Barney
3:00 America's Funniest People
3:30 He Shoots He Scores
4:30 Shingalana
5:00 French Programmes
7:00 Le Journal
7:15 French Programme
7:30 News Headlines
7:35 Trivial Pursuit
8:00 The Parenthood
8:30 Lois And Clark — Superman
9:10 Kung Fu — The Legend Continues
10:00 News In English
10:30 Movie
12:00 Step By Step
12:00 End Of T.X.

7:35 Fresh Prince Of Belair
8:00 Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
8:30 National Geographic
9:10 Renegade
10:00 News In English
10:30 One West Waikiki
11:15 Sisters
12:00 End Of T.X.

Monday, September 15, 1997

2:00 Holy Koran
2:10 The Show With The Mouse
2:30 Cowboys Of The Moo Mesa
3:00 Gillette Sports Special
3:30 Deep Water Haven
4:00 Animal Show
4:30 Ocean Girl
5:15 French Programmes
7:00 Le Journal
7:15 French Programme
7:30 News Headlines
7:35 Neighbours
8:00 The Health Show
8:30 Hawkeye Of Brisco County
9:10 Clive James Postcards
10:00 News In English
10:30 Best Seller
11:15 Movie Or Daddy's Girls

2:00 Holy Koran
2:10 The Show With The Mouse
2:30 Cowboys Of The Moo Mesa
3:00 Gillette Sports Special
3:30 Deep Water Haven
4:00 Animal Show
4:30 Ocean Girl
5:15 French Programmes
7:00 Le Journal
7:15 French Programme
7:30 News Headlines
7:35 Neighbours
8:00 Murphy Brown
8:30 Babylon 5
9:10 Highlander
10:00 News In English
10:35 Emergency Room (E.R.)
11:15 Homicide
12:00 End Of T.X.

Tuesday, September 16, 1997

2:00 Holy Koran
2:10 Twinkle
2:30 Muppet Show
3:00 Blue Heelers
3:30 World Of Geo
4:00 The Valley Between
4:30 Tilt
5:00 French Programme
7:00 Le Journal
7:30 News Headlines
7:35 Neighbours
8:00 The Newly Weds
8:30 Prism
9:10 Time Trax
10:00 News In English
11:15 Movie
12:00 End Of T.X.

2:00 Holy Koran
2:10 Sandocan
2:30 C.R.O.
3:00 Square One T.V.
3:30 Skippy
4:00 Album Show
5:00 French Programmes
7:00 Le Journal
7:30 News Headlines
7:35 Coach
8:00 Tilt 23.5
8:30 Encounter (Local Talk Show)
9:10 Nature Of Things (Documentary)
10:00 News In English
10:30 Great Defender
11:15 I Remember Nelson
12:00 End Of T.X.

Wednesday, September 17, 1997

2:00 Holy Koran
2:10 Little Rosey
2:30 The Magic School Bus
3:00 Lucky Luke
3:40 Energy Express
4:00 American Chart Show
5:00 French Programmes
7:00 Le Journal
7:30 News Headlines

2:00 Holy Koran
2:10 Jonny Quest
2:30 Super Dave
3:00 Secrets Of Treasure Island
3:30 Spell Binder
4:00 Munsters Today
4:30 Border Town
5:00 French Programmes
7:00 Le Journal
7:30 News Headlines
7:35 Neighbours
8:00 Soldier's Diary
8:30 Oprah Winfrey Show
9:10 Challenges
10:00 News In English
10:30 Land's End
11:15 American Gothic
12:00 End Of T.X.

Sunday, September 14, 1997

2:00 Holy Koran
2:10 Little Rosey
2:30 The Magic School Bus
3:00 Lucky Luke
3:40 Energy Express
4:00 American Chart Show
5:00 French Programmes
7:00 Le Journal
7:30 News Headlines

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

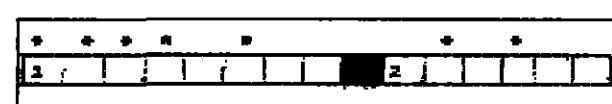
Mohammad A. Shugair

ORIGINS OF ARABIC NAMES

- **LAMIS:** Smooth touching or a soft woman.
- **MOUSA:** Refers to Prophet Mousa; a blade used for shaving.
- **SAMER:** One who sits up and chats at night.
- **MUFTI:** A jurist whose job is to give answers to religious issues.
- **BAKHIT:** Fortunate; lucky.
- **AKEF:** One who lives in seclusion devoting himself to something or busily engaged in doing something.

rect, the letters under the stars will give the solution to the star clue.

1. Tennis star with flowery beginning.
2. Punishment is something a boxer must be able to....
- * Women's Table Tennis Champion from 1950 to 1955.



(B) SOMETHING IN COMMON

Which is the odd one out?



LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

- ** Don't look on the dark side of things.
La tatasha'am.
- ** No call for anxiety.
La daa'i lil-qalaq.
- ** Don't do that at my expense.
La ta'fal thalek ala hisabi.
- ** Do something instead of looking about.
La taqiff maktoof al-aydi.
- ** You can't get close to him.
La yomkinoka at-taqarob elayhi.
- ** Never stand to doubt.
La tada' ash-shak yatasarrab elayk.
- ** I can't get on with you anymore.
La astati' al-insejam ma'ak.
- ** Don't worry. I'll remind you.
La tosh'ghil baalak. Sawfa othakkikrok.
- ** I'm nobody in the affair.
La sha'na lee fee haatha al-amr.

JOKES

- A girl to a new friend:
"You're really my first love."
"I believe you, dear," he answered.
"You're the first one to believe what I say," added the girl.

- A SCOTSMAN once wrote to the London Times:
"If your newspaper never ceases publishing propaganda about our people's parsimony, I'll abstain reading or borrowing copies from my neighbours."

- A SON whose father is a businessman once asked him:
"What do you mean by 'bankruptcy, dad?'"
"Bankruptcy, son, is to keep your money in your trouser's pocket and let your creditors take your coat away."

PUZZLES

(A) SPORTSTARS

HERE is a test of your sporting knowledge. Write the answers to clues 1 and 2 into the diagram. If they are cor-

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. Who was the first man to drive over 400 m.p.h?
2. What does NASCAR stand for?
3. Name the "Robin Goodfellow" imp in Shakespeare's Midsummer Night's Dream.
4. Match the flick with its geographic setting:
 1. Bon Voyage, Charlie Brown (a) Vienna
 2. Green Dolphin Street (b) Honolulu
 3. Giant (c) France
 4. From Here to Eternity (d) Texas
 5. The Third Man (e) New Zealand

Norwegian actress turns auteur

LONDON (AP) — For two decades or more, Liv Ullmann was Ingmar Bergman's partner on screen and off, the luminous centre of Persona, Scenes From A Marriage, Autumn Sonata and the harrowing Face To Face.

Now 58, the twice Oscar-nominated actress prefers working behind the camera. Although she and Bergman ended a personal liaison years ago, their professional one continues: The reclusive Swedish filmmaker wrote Ullmann's third feature film, Private Confessions, which had an acclaimed European premiere during the Cannes Festival in May.

"I more or less decided I wouldn't be an actor if I could make my living as a film director," Ullmann said by telephone from her home in Oslo. (She keeps a second, smaller, apartment in

New York, where she was a Broadway stage regular during the 1970s.)

For her, satisfaction lies in perpetuating a rich tradition of the Scandinavian cinema of the '60s and '70s.

"We had a great time," she said, reflecting on an almost communal repertory ensemble that included Bergman, cameraman Sven Nykvist — her colleague on Private Confessions.

"I'm glad I had an opportunity to do my craft that way," she said. "It was one of the few places where people could still meet and learn and be together."

It was happier time, then, than filming the notorious Hollywood bomb *Lost Horizon*?

Ullmann laughed. "I put down a few studios with whatever horrible films I did in Hollywood. But I knew I could just go back and do *Scenes From A*

Marriage, living on an island with outdoor toilets, and I thought, God, am I privileged."

She spoke of absorbing the Bergman manner whereby characters' interior lives carry the same intensity and charge that audiences now get from special effects. Her directing efforts — Sophie, Kristin Lavransdatter and now *Private Confessions*, all bear the master's meditative imprint.

"I happen to think we are not like TV, where you smile while talking about the latest plane accident," she said.

Nonetheless, a 3 1/2-hour version of *Private Confessions* was shown on Scandinavian television last Christmas. And several great Bergman films also exist in longer, fuller TV versions.

Too many movies are obsessed with computers,

data and special effects at the expense of recognisable human behaviour, Ullmann said.

"What the Americans are doing is making films about data and cyberspace, about cartoons and crime and violence, and the more expensive an actor is, the more they want him," she said.

But, "I don't know people who travel through space and do all those things. Nowadays, a film is modern if it talks about who we are — about relationships and deepest thoughts, why people love and why they hate," all the more reason to champion a personal cinema.

"In this age of data, if we don't learn more about each other's cultures, where we come from, what makes us breathe and long and dream, we will be absolutely lost, isolated."



Liv Ullmann in Ingmar Bergman's film *Face To Face*

Canada's Cirque goes on screen with adult fable

By Lien Van Der Leij
Reuter

AMSTERDAM — Canada's internationally acclaimed Cirque Du Soleil is up to its subversive tricks again — turning its circus show into a film, shooting a fairy tale meant for adults, getting workaday extras to express their personalities.

Currently filming at a string of off-beat locations in Amsterdam and Berlin, *Alegria* is a feature-length fable loosely inspired by the

company's circus show of the same name which has drawn capacity audiences around the United States, Asia and Europe.

Initial rushes promise that the Cirque's anarchic-Bohemian and often outrageous tradition will this time spawn a visually lush parable with touches of popular musical, almost as if Britain's Peter Greenaway had been asked to direct the musical *Oliver*.

"It's a simple little love story but with a big sub-

text," says writer-producer Rudy Barichello. "It deals with the exploitation of the world's children and political disillusionment."

"The film may look innocent, but it has several levels," says Franco Dragone, the film's director and creator of the stage show. "It's a film which is made for adults but can be seen by children."

"I don't only want to shoot a show...I want to touch people to make them aware of atrocities like the 250

million children working under terrible conditions."

Dragone looks to the individual within the actor and makes a point of getting all his players, including extras, to put their own personalities into their role.

"There is an overall framework, but within that things are fluid," he explains as he reviews a motley crew of beggars, tramps, dwarves and dancers for the "Cauldron" or market place scenes, filmed on location at Amsterdam's derelict Olym-

pic stadium.

A tall African American in traditional dress is encouraged to dance in his efforts to sell lengths of bright material, while an old man in a loin cloth and a ferociously tattooed Hell's Angel leave the viewer wondering where on earth the film is set.

Symbol of the world and worldly disillusionment, the cauldron is flanked by the stifling *Cafe L'Opera*, where artists fallen on hard times drink their days away, and the red light district where

prostitutes perch like birds in cages displaying themselves to a jaded public.

Despite having cost only \$300,000 just under a tenth of the film's estimated total budget, the other worldly sets are naggingly unsettling to an adult viewer.

They are the work of Dutch designer Ben Van Os, a prize-winning veteran of eight Peter Greenaway movies, including *Drowning By Numbers*, and *Prospero's Books*, and are intended to counterpoint the simple mo-

ral message of the storyline. Inspired by the *Tableaux Vivants*, which make up the stage show, the film follows the fortunes of Frac, played by Rene Bazinet.

A street mime artist who has lost his love for performing, Frac is about to throw himself under a train when he meets Giulietta, a circus performer whose troupe is aboard the train.

Together they fight to free Frac's friend Momo from the clutches of Marcello, who enslaves children to

work for him in a squalid factory, and to overcome the opposition of Giulietta's father to their love.

"The plot is individual to the film, but the universe of the Cirque Du Soleil is a fable for our times. You could describe it as a rallying cry," says Dragone.

"You could describe it as a rallying cry," says Dragone. "There is a future...Alegria is a fable for our times. You can always do something to change ugliness."

The film is due to be released next spring.

Performers fight to bring movies to the screen

By John Horn
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Robert Duvall, Michelle Pfeiffer, Johnny Depp and Gary Oldman never have performed in a movie together, but they're all part of a new Hollywood ensemble: High-profile actors who by hook or by crook personally shepherd difficult movies to the screen.

Rejected by virtually everybody in town, Duvall spent \$5 million of his own money to make *The Apostle*, premiering at the Toronto International Film Festival. Pfeiffer's production company purchased film rights to Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres* and then helped guide the project through years of dead-ends and delays. It opens on Sept. 19.

Depp and Oldman made their writing-directing debuts in *The Brave* and *Nil By Mouth*, respectively. Depp's film, which does not have a distribution date, is set against the murky world of snuff films. Oldman's effort, due next February, is a loosely autobiographical tale about an alcoholic who beats his pregnant wife. Both films were shown at this year's Cannes Film Festival.

Duvall searched 13 fruitless years for backing for *The Apostle*, a story written by Duvall, who casted himself as a devout preacher whose wife is caught in an affair.

"Everybody said, 'well, it's a good idea, but we don't know if it's commercial,'" Duvall says of his hunt for financing. "I knocked on many doors. I had people trying to raise money for me. But it didn't work out." Even his talent agents promised to find backers. "But it was all hot-air talk," he says.

Duvall's accountant finally suggested that the Academy Award-winning actor finance the film from the actor's savings. "I guess my CPA green-lit the film," Duvall says with a laugh. "But it definitely would not have got made if I didn't spend my own money."

With his own money on the line, Duvall also decided to direct *The Apostle*. Billy Bob Thornton, Farrah Fawcett



Michelle Pfeiffer talks to the press

and Miranda Richardson joined the cast.

"I thought I would have to put up a full-length mirror so I could yell at the director," Duvall says of simultaneously working in front of and behind the camera. "But I didn't have to do that. We even finished one day ahead of schedule. It's a movie I'm proud of."

In a delicious twist, many of the people who said no to Duvall are now clamouring to see the movie and bid on its distribution rights. Duvall says he has received more than two-dozen calls from distributors. The movie had its world premiere on Sept. 6.

For all her star power, Pfeiffer's passion for *A Thousand Acres* was first met with equal indifference. The Pulitzer Prize-winning novel chronicles three sisters on an Iowa farm as their lives are transformed by a vengeful patriarch and allegations of incest.

"There was some concern that the movie wouldn't be commercial — but the book is what it is," says Pfeiffer, who stars in the film opposite Jessica Lange and Jason Robards. "The strength of

this story is how deeply provocative it is. If you make the movie, you have to go all the way with it."

Pfeiffer and her producing partner, Kate Guinzburg, first read *A Thousand Acres* as a manuscript, before its 1991 publication. Pfeiffer and Lange were looking for a movie to make together, and the book was a perfect fit. The two performers decided to produce the movie jointly, and both committed to star.

The Hollywood suits still wouldn't budge.

"We were turned down by every studio," Guinzburg says. "They were afraid to take a chance on darker material — they were scared." Adds Pfeiffer: "I thought in my heart the movie would never get made."

Pfeiffer persisted. "I really can't complain about the roles I'm offered. I've been pretty satisfied," Pfeiffer says.

"But it is rare that you get to work with women, and rarer still that the whole relationships in a movie are based on women. This kind of material doesn't come across the desk every day. And it would just break my heart if I didn't play this role. I

can't say that about too many roles."

Coordinating Pfeiffer and Lange's schedules with Director Jocelyn Moorhouse's proved nearly impossible. Then, five years after Pfeiffer bought rights to the book, a brief window opened. Good news, except Pfeiffer was coming off *One Fine Day* and *Up Close And Personal* and desperately wanted a break.

"I was exhausted," she says. "But I just knew if I pushed it off, the movie would never get made. I was really scraping the bottom of the barrel. I used every ounce of energy I had. And I haven't done anything since."

Although *A Thousand Acres* will be distributed by the Walt Disney Co., it was made without studio money. The funds came from independent producers Beacon Pictures and Propaganda films.

Pfeiffer says the experi-

ence, while draining, has been deeply rewarding. "It certainly is a bigger sense of accomplishment, particularly when it's something you believe in."

Like Duvall, both Depp and Oldman directed themselves, with dramatically different results. Oldman's *Nil By Mouth* attracted positive reviews at Cannes and was picked up by Sony Pictures Classics, who plan to release it early next year.

People who have seen Depp's *The Brave* say the movie is unwatchable, not even rescued by a Marlon Brando Cameo as a snuff film producer. One acquisitions executive compares it to the intentionally dreadful *Springtime For Hitler* musical from 1967's *The Producers*. Daily Variety's review was similarly negative, calling *The Brave* a "turgid and unbelievable neo-Western" and "strikingly preposterous."

THOUGHT FOR THIS WEEK

I believe in the discipline of silence and can talk for hours about it.

— George Bernard Shaw, Irish-born playwright (1856-1950)

Women shut out again from country music's highest honour

NASHVILLE, Tennessee (AP) — This month, a man will climb the stairs to the stage at the Grand Ole Opry and claim the Country Music Association's (CMA) Entertainer of the Year Award, country music's most prestigious honour.

Make that two men if the Duo Brooks and Dunn repeat their 1996 victory.

There's no chance a woman will take that walk on Sept. 24. For the second straight year, none is nominated.

Not one of country's top-selling female singers — Reba McEntire, Shania Twain, Leann Rimes, Deana Carter, Trisha Yearwood or Patty Loveless — made the grade with industry voters.

"It is frustrating to see it over and over again," says singer Kathy Mattea, an Entertainer of the Year nominee in 1990. "The women that win the category have to do so much for so long. It's hard to imagine a man having to do as much."

In the 30-year history of the award, women have won five times: Loretta Lynn in 1972; Dolly Parton, 1978; Barbara Mandrell, 1980 and '81; and McEntire, 1986.

The only female nominees of the 1990s have been Mattea and McEntire, even though many of country music's signature records of the decade were performed by women: Blue by Rimes, Carter's *Strawberry Wine*, Believe Me Baby (I Lied) by Yearwood, and Patty Loveless' *You Don't Even Know Who I Am*.

"Women have been making very exciting music and having tremendous sales success," says David Ross, who publishes the country music trade

magazine *Music Row*. "I think it's fair to say the ratio vs men in terms of sales and radio airplay is very evenly distributed now," he says.

Women are represented elsewhere on this year's CMA ballot.

"Look at the Horizon Award, which picks performers with the brightest futures. There are four women and one man nominated," CMA spokeswoman Teresa George notes.

The Horizon nominees are Carter, Rimes, Terri Clark and Lee Ann Womack, with Trace Adkins the sole man.

Two of three Country Music Hall of Fame inductees this year are women: Singer Brenda Lee and songwriter Cindy Walker.

"Overall, this year there are 18 females nominated, and they also outnumber the guys in tough categories like Album of the Year," George says.

Still, the nominees for the top award are the same manly crowd as 1996: Brooks and Dunn, Garth Brooks, Vince Gill, Alan Jackson and George Strait.

The 7,000 industry workers who nominate and vote for Entertainer of the Year are told to judge on the following criteria:

"This award is for the act displaying the greatest competence in all aspects of the entertainment field. Voters should give consideration not only to recorded performance, but also to the in-person performance, staging, public acceptance, attitude, leadership, and overall contribution to the country music image."

Females tend to fall short with voters for performance, says Holly Gleason, the publicist for Loveless,

Collin Raye and other country singers.

"It comes down to headlining status. It comes down to the perception of being important to the format," she says. "Selling records is one thing. Putting butts in seats is another. I think that's really become how people gauge it. How many true women headliners are there out there?"

Some of country's biggest female success stories don't extend yet to live shows.

Twain sold millions of her *The Woman In Me* CD without touring, and Rimes has spent most of 1997 working as an opening act for Jackson and Gill. Even McEntire, renowned for her flashy live act, toured on a package show with Brooks and Dunn this year.

"It seems to be harder for women to hit the big headline status," Mattea says. "Whether that is something that is manufactured by the industry, it's hard to be objective about."

"It's not blatant discrimination. I think it's a more subtle psychological barrier. ... It takes years to unlearn ideas that are imposed on us."

It may be that voters just aren't convinced relative newcomers like Rimes and Carter are here to stay. Of the five 1997 Entertainer of the Year nominees, Brooks and Dunn is the newest act, with its first chart record in 1991.

"There's a time lag between getting moving and that perception getting out there," Ross says. "People tend to vote for familiar names."

Norway's sick health sector is a factor in elections

By Rolf Soderlund
Reuter

OSLO — When Norwegians go to the polls in the Sept. 15 election, their experiences with the country's health care system could play a role in deciding how they vote.

Oil-rich Norway prides itself with a cradle-to-grave welfare system, but shortcomings in its state-run health sector and care for the elderly have become major issues ahead of the election.

The Labour minority government and the opposition right and left of centre are all campaigning for a more efficient health system and ways to ease heavy-handed bureaucracy.

While most countries have difficulties financing their public health care, Norway has run up a budget surplus for three consecutive years thanks to the offshore petroleum sector.

The government, which is fighting an uphill battle in opinion polls, has the unpopular task of blocking attempts by the opposition to increase public spending.

A tight fiscal policy may keep inflation at bay, but the opposition and people in the street have difficulties seeing why the budget surplus is not spent on improving health care.

Suppressing the temptation to go on a spending spree, the government is putting the surplus in the state petroleum fund for investment in foreign securities. The fund is expected to hold more than 100 billion crowns (\$13.4 billion) by the end of the year.

Vigdis Borge, 53, says she will vote for the tiny Pensioners' Party — which is not represented in parliament — because "the pensioners have

learned what we need in Norway."

"I have seen most of the world so I can verify how poor the health sector in Norway is," said Ms. Borge, a former travel agency executive who retired early 14 years ago with arthritis. "I have never had problems with health care anywhere but in Norway."

She recently returned from treatment for her rheumatism in Igalo, Montenegro — Norway could not offer similar treatment — because she suffered a heart attack.

"Everything functioned there in former Yugoslavia. I spent two weeks in a military hospital and another week and a half in a civilian hospital."

"But after you are flown back to Norway and carried into your own home you are left on your own. You run into a wall in the Norwegian health sector," she told Reuters. "We are a developing country when it comes to health care. Patients are treated like parcels, not as human beings."

System better than its reputation

Ingeborg Traaholt, secretary general of the Association of Norwegian Patients, an independent watchdog on patients' rights, said the health care system was better than its reputation.

"Norway does not have poor health care," she said. "But Norwegians have high-quality expectations of the health services and rightly so. There is no reason why we could not have the best system in the world. I don't know if we need more money for the health sector, but if this is the case I believe we are willing to pay for it."

Norway spent 7.3 per cent of gross domestic

product on the health sector in 1994, the latest year for which statistics are available.

"We should keep the public health care system, but we don't see enough proposals for making life easier for patients. They cannot measure the quality of health care in this country because they have nothing to compare with. That is a scandal."

"You get to go to the hospital where you live, and chances are that you will not be referred to another hospital that perhaps could have provided better care," she said.

The government recently introduced proposals to improve the health services, including granting patients the right to seek a second opinion at a hospital outside their county.

The Health Ministry defended the public health system, which is funded by taxes, and criticised private health care in other countries such as the United States.

"The Norwegian people do not want their wallet, connections or other external circumstances to decide if they can get well," the ministry said.

Long waiting lists, shortage of doctors

Most politicians agree, however, that the country's system of waiting lists for patients needs more work.

All who make an appointment for an examination or treatment at a hospital — with the exception of those in immediate need of care — are placed on the waiting list.

While the waiting list may be a useful tool for the authorities in checking hospital capacity, many patients find it bureaucratic and unfair and want to jump the queue.

Official statistics show

nearly 300,000 patients were on various waiting lists on April 30, the latest figure available.

Patients who are seriously ill are guaranteed treatment within six months, but thousands find themselves still waiting for treatment after the deadline has expired.

The welfare system covers treatment abroad if Norwegian hospitals lack the competence to cure an illness. Norway, a country of 4.3 million, has a shortage of medical doctors.

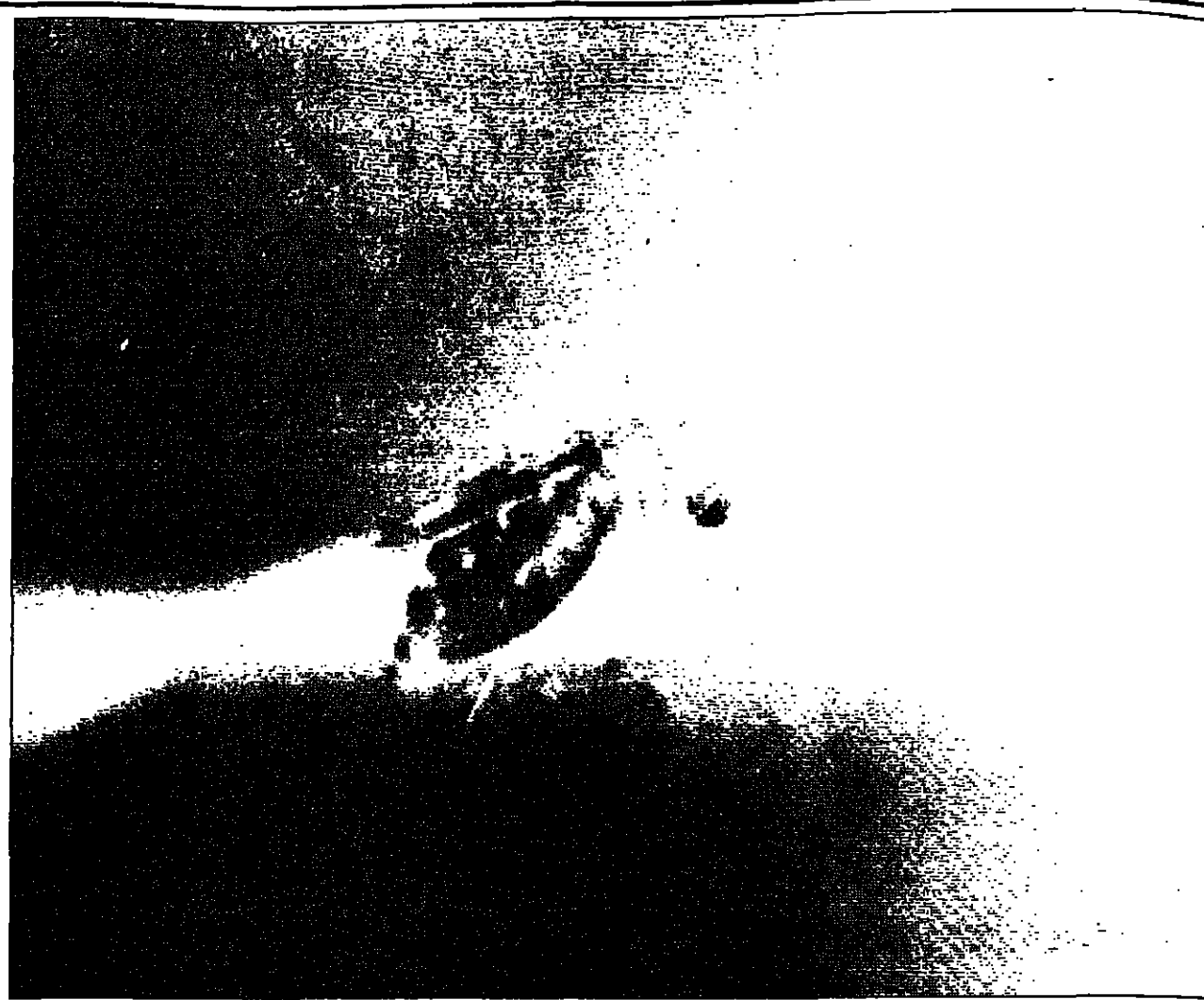
However, some 1,400 foreign doctors have shown interest in moving to Norway for a period of time following an initiative by the Norwegian Labour Directorate, which advertised for help in Germany, Austria, France and other countries.

Ragnhild Dalgard, head nurse of the medical infection ward at Oslo's Ullevaal Hospital, Norway's largest, said: "We have never done more in terms of medical care, but the queues to the hospitals have never been longer."

"Our population has grown older. I think we have a good health sector. When people are really ill they get care, but the care for the old who built our country should be improved," Ms. Dalgard said.

She said her ward, which has 240 beds, has patients sleeping in corridors.

"We often have to put 30 patients in the corridors. This is because the care for pensioners is insufficient. Elderly patients are waiting for a place in a home care centre."



Shown in this file picture is a blood-fed *Culex nigripalpus* mosquito. A crop duster sprayed about 8,000 acres (3,238 hectares) of mosquito-infested land around Orlando's theme parks and tourist attractions on Aug 28 in Florida's fight to stem an outbreak of deadly mosquito-borne encephalitis. So far, no humans have tested positive for the disease. But the virus has turned up in test animals used to determine whether local populations of mosquitoes are carriers. Eight Florida counties have reported finding the virus and the outbreak in the heart of one of the world's busiest vacation destinations concerns the \$38-billion-a-year tourist industry (Reuter photo)

Florida encephalitis fight goes airborne

By Brad Liston
Reuter

ORLANDO, Florida — A crop duster sprayed about 8,000 acres of mosquito-infested land around Orlando's theme parks and tourist attractions in Florida's fight to stem an outbreak of deadly mosquito-borne encephalitis.

So far, no humans have tested positive for the disease. But the virus has turned up in test animals used to determine whether local populations of mosquitoes are carriers.

Eight Florida counties have reported finding the virus and the outbreak in the heart of one of the world's busiest vacation destinations concerns the \$38-billion-a-year tourist industry.

With each passing day, the public seems to be taking the threat more seriously.

"We can't stock enough mosquito repellent," said Joyce Allen, a drugstore clerk on tourist-packed international drive in Orlando. "On Monday, that wasn't the case. Now we've

got people saying, 'if you don't have mosquito repellent, do you have mosquito netting, long sleeve shirts, anything.'"

Poolside at Walt Disney World's Grand Floridian Hotel, Dieter Schmidt of Frankfurt, Germany, said his first reaction to a warning issued by Disney was alarm.

"We find this letter in our room and it says that you should not go outside at night or you die," he said. "Some vacation, huh?"

But Schmidt said he now understands the resort was doing no more than urging common-sense precaution.

"We went to the nightclubs last night," said his wife, Yollanda Schmidt. "We bought the mosquito spray, you know, and wore all our clothes and we didn't see any insects at all. Perfectly safe."

People may be safer at Orlando's resorts than in its residential neighbourhoods, said Bill Breaud, manager of Orange County's Mosquito Control Unit. "If you're walking down Main

Street in the Magic Kingdom, you're not going to be bit by a mosquito," he said.

There was a greater risk after dark at golf courses, swimming pools and wooded areas like Disney's Fort Wilderness. Disney has made nighttime activities in those areas off-limits since last Tuesday. Much of central Florida's entertainment industry followed suit.

Encephalitis is not transmitted from human to human, according to health authorities. Female mosquitoes looking for an evening blood meal, are the only known carriers.

The virus causes a sudden inflammation of the brain, with symptoms turning up five to 15 days after exposure. In mild cases, symptoms can include fever, headaches and a stiff neck. Severe cases bring on seizures, double vision, behavioural abnormalities and drowsiness that leads to coma.

The elderly and very young are at greatest risk, health officials said.

"I don't think anyone can

say this isn't serious," said Dr. Heidar Heshmati of neighbouring Brevard County, home of the Kennedy Space Centre, where beaches and hotels were expected to fill over the Labour Day weekend.

Eleven people died in a 1990 outbreak of the disease. Although two suspected cases in his county turned out to be negative, Mr. Heshmati warned that people headed to the beach needed to be inside by dusk, or at least wear long clothing and use mosquito repellent.

About 100 blood samples had been sent from across the state to a lab for testing but so far none had proved positive for encephalitis.

"Ahh, it's all hysteria," said Peter Long, a tourist from London, who said he would wear the same attire, shorts, sandals and sleeveless shirt. "Morning, noon and night it's 90 degrees Fahrenheit. These are bleeding mosquitoes, not vampires."

Dieters need not shun beef — Australian study

SYDNEY (R) — Women who exclude all red meat from their diets to lose weight fare no better than women who continue to eat moderate amounts of lean beef, according to an Australian study.

The study, by Melbourne's Baker Medical Research Institute, was jointly funded by the National Heart Foundation and an industry body, the Meat Research Corp.

It showed that overweight women, mainly between 30 and 45 years of age, achieved the same weight reduction, about nine per cent of initial body weight in 16 weeks, irrespective of whether their diets included lean beef or soybean.

The study follows con-

cern in Australia's red meat industry over falling sales as red meat loses favour with consumers. Its findings were released by the meat industry's main statutory authority, the Australian Meat and Livestock Corp (AMLC).

Researchers led by the institute's Professor Paul Nestel set out to establish that eating lean beef within a calorie-controlled diet does not interfere with weight loss. The AMLC said.

After a study of 36 overweight women, half of whom continued to eat beef, Prof. Nestel concluded that reducing energy intake was the key and staple foods like beef need not be excluded.

Other benefits such as

blood pressure and cholesterol reductions and improvements in arterial health were also equal in both groups of women studied.

Prof. Nestel said the findings were important: "The more a weight-loss eating plan resembles a normal diet, the more likely it is to succeed."

The researchers said that women often followed fad diets or misleading dietary advice and one piece of "misinformation" was that staple foods like red meat should be cut out.

In the Australian study, two groups of 18 obese women were put on separate diets over a 16-week period. The energy and fat content of both groups was similar, but one group

included 150 grammes of lean red meat at least five times a week. The other group did not eat red meat at all, substituting soybean, although the women still ate chicken or fish at other meals.

Both groups achieved an average nine per cent reduction in body weight over the 16 weeks, with the lean beef group losing an average 7.8 kilograms and the "semi-vegetarian" group an average 7.6 kilograms.

The two groups also achieved a 12-per cent reduction in plasma cholesterol levels, a seven-per cent reduction in blood pressure and equal reductions in the elasticity of arteries, the AMLC said in a statement.

U.S. study links stomach cancer to smoking

WASHINGTON (R) — More than 40 per cent of the cases of stomach and esophageal cancer can be blamed on smoking, and quitting does not cut the risk for 30 years, U.S. researchers reported.

Marilee Gammon and colleagues at the Columbia University School of Public Health said the rates of cancers of the stomach and esophagus, which leads into the stomach, had risen steeply in the United States and Europe in recent years. They said white males were especially prone.

Reporting in the journal of the National Cancer Institute, Gammon's group said smoking was a clear

risk factor for two different kinds of cancer — adenocarcinoma and squamous cell cancer.

They studied more than 1,000 people aged 30 to 79 who had been diagnosed with cancer of the esophagus or stomach and compared them to 600 people who did not have cancer.

They carefully questioned them about alcohol or tobacco use, diet, medication and other factors.

They found the risk of adenocarcinoma was doubled among current and ex-smokers. The higher risk lasted for up to 30 years after someone stopped smoking, they added.

ANSWERS PUZZLES

(A) SPORTSTARS

1. ROSEWALL.
2. ENDURE.
- * ROSEANU.

(B) SOMETHING IN COMMON

— Penknife is the only one not beginning with C

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. John R. Cobb.
2. National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing.
3. Puck.
4. 1. - C
5. 2. - D
6. 3. - E
7. 4. - B
8. 5. - A

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

SPORTING CHANCES

By Gayle Waters Dean

ACROSS

1. Sauce for spaghetti
6. Aerial Indiana
15. Modern jazz pianist
19. Prefers to be a
20. Nightwatchy period
21. Shaver's
22. River into the
23. Follow
24. Cane syndrome
25. Chores down
26. Adulterate
27. Romanesque
28. Plaque
29. Map feature abbr
30. TV agent

DOWN

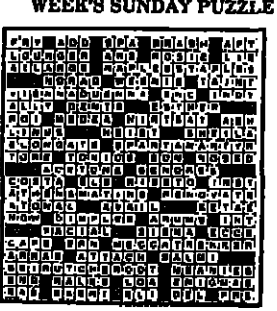
1. Journal
2. Balance
3. Ave
4. Rich Williams
5. Movie
6. Put truck to work
7. Lay it out in
8. Foul
9. Lancers' abbr
10. Point leader
11. Fama museum
12. Skull
13. Causal base
14. Fable
15. Duncan's nemesis
16. Electrical
17. Sharp negative
18. Bone of Gordius
19. Chastity veil
20. Popper's revolt
21. Half-dealer
22. Truck

Diagramless 19x19

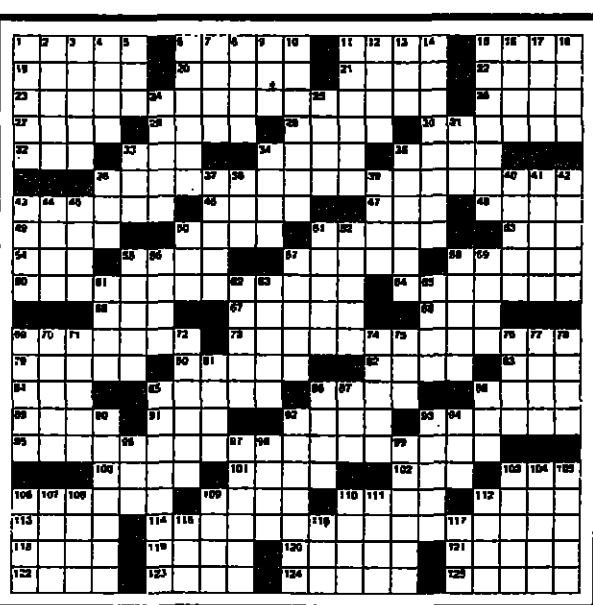
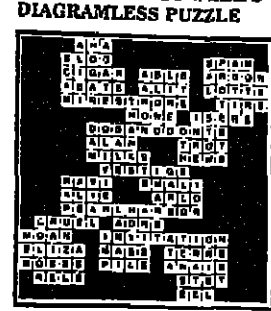
By Harold B. Counts

1. Spread contacts
2. Release from jail
3. Question group
4. Fox
5. Outside fabric
6. Nucleus
7. Rational
8. Gem
9. Late singer, Yvette
10. Doublet
11. Support
12. Passenger
13. Down
14. Incline
15. Mr. Chassis
16. Puzzle
17. Lancelot's love
18. Outside fabric
19. Nucleus
20. Out (made do)
21. Doublet
22. Quail
23. Staff
24. Males' abbr
25. Chums

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S SUNDAY PUZZLE



SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DIAGRAMLESS PUZZLE



Last Week's Cryptograms

1. New chef cooked up a meal of turnips, brussels sprouts, garlic, leeks and lamb for highbrow restaurant.
2. Judge and jury award young bigamist brutal punishment: multiple mothers-in-law for life.
3. Not much will produce more irritation than mail with addressee shows as "occupant."
4. Billiard player thinks lopsided table made him miss easy bank shot.

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. TDQFZC DHJ JDLBFGZC ZSAFDBZJ
DLQNCBDMFE XT YXSZCK DQ D YWB MDCQI
TXC TDDQWA MLRWVWQQA TDRK XHVI.

— By Karl Ireland

2. UPF SMUT'E LNNEXM, XUDAQE XQFQA
BUQTPFZ GQNNB HXQNNMS PLUMNCH LT
CLMPPH-QA XQNNH LN DMBEX GPQM
SMUTH.

— By Rita Salvato

3. BUUSTLETL HCU B TEKA MBUBYA ET LCCY
CUYAU EF B MUCKAPFECT MUCKAPFECT.

— By Ed Endicott

4. FWSURUWO XINAY DOBLWORD MUG
WNYUDORGC XUBM MUG SAWFILING
DOBLWORD.

— By Frank M. Stein

Albright starts rescue mission of peace with pro-Israeli statement

(Continued from page 1)

to making further troop withdrawals from the West Bank.

Asked about chances of the success of her mission, she said: "I am a realist."

"I take every day as a test," she said. "Making a difference as secretary of state is something that is on my mind all the time. I do feel it's important, and I would like very much to make some difference."

Upon arrival in Israel early Wednesday, Ms. Albright was met by Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy who had threatened to resign if Mr. Netanyahu's government abandoned the peace process.

"It is very moving to see the bravery of the people here. You can see in their eyes that they are ready for a new life...." Ms. Albright said as she visited Hadasah Mount Scopus hospi-

tal.

Israelis and Palestinians said they planned to hand Ms. Albright documents listing what they expect of the other side, and complaining about violations of the peace agreement.

In a four-page list, Israel demanded that the Palestinians arrest large numbers of Hamas activists, disarm the group and cut off funding. But Palestinian officials say the kind of mass crackdown demand-

ed by Israel would lead to civil war.

Israel also said the Palestinians must reduce their police force from 35,000 to 24,000, as stipulated in the agreement, dismiss the police chief suspected of incitement against Israel and agree to Israeli and U.S. monitoring to ensure compliance. But the PNA rejected the list of Israeli demands as "blackmail" designed to force political concessions.

The 29-page Palestinian document said Israel is building 19,000 settlement units and has been revoking Palestinian residency rights in Jerusalem as part of a policy to increase the Jewish population of the disputed city.

Israel's closure of the West Bank and Israeli demolitions of Palestinian homes constitute collective punishment, the document said.

Treaty on landmines should be 'without exceptions, reservations, loopholes'

By Hind-Lara Mango
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — One week into the Oslo Diplomatic Conference, that started Sept. 1 and will last for three weeks, there are already mixed views as to the actual outcome of the meeting which is debating the wording of an Austrian draft to a new international humanitarian treaty banning the production, transfer, stockpiling, and use of anti-personnel landmines.

Dr. Ma'rouf Bakhit, vice president for military affairs at Mu'ta University, told the Jordan Times that Jordan did not have any hesitations regarding the actual wording of the text.

"In principle, Jordan supports all humanitarian efforts aimed at achieving a total ban on anti-personal landmines," he said. That is why, Dr. Bakhit continued, Jordan had adopted the Brussels Declaration in July this year.

"Jordan is open to international cooperation, but we have to wait and see," he said, adding that Jordan will not sign before all states sign this treaty and it becomes universal.

Jordan did not commit itself to the final signing of the actual agreement, to take place in Ottawa in December, which would commit countries to long-term programmes to meet the

needs of mine victims and to clear existing mines.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which has been campaigning for the past four years for a universal ban on anti-personnel mines, has expressed satisfaction with the deliberations of the past week.

"The ICRC is extremely encouraged by the way things are going, on Sept. 8 we received the new text which will be the basis for negotiations for the coming week," said ICRC delegate to the Oslo Conference Stuart Maslene.

In a telephone interview with the Jordan Times Mr. Maslene said that the draft text is "very solid and, with a few improvements, will hopefully be adopted at the end of the conference."

According to the ICRC delegate, 91 states are currently full participants in the negotiations, whilst 30 remain as observers, as is the case with members from the ICRC, International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, the United Nations, and several non-governmental bodies.

Mr. Maslene explained that states described as observers are those that are not ready to support the Brussels Declaration or commit themselves to a total ban of anti-personnel mines.

Other observers, however, have

expressed reservations regarding the outcome of the meeting, particularly since the United States, from the very first day of negotiations, proposed a permanent exception for new use of anti-personnel mines in Korea.

According to a statement by the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), "last minute participation by the U.S. and their introduction, on Sept. 1, of a geographic exception is perhaps the biggest threat to the whole process and our ability to come together and forge a true ban treaty."

The U.S. proposal to exempt U.N.-commanded forces in Korea from the general prohibition on anti-personnel mines remains on the table.

Mr. Maslene noted that although "there have been a number of proposals to change the definition (of anti-personnel mines) in the existing text and two possible exceptions, the large majority of states are calling for a strong and clear definition and a treaty without exceptions."

"It is very much our hope that states will make it clear that what we are doing is banning all anti-personnel mines immediately," Mr. Maslene stressed, adding that "the ultimate aim of the Oslo conference is a treaty without exceptions, reservations or loopholes."

UNRWA to cancel part of austerity measures

(Continued from page 1)

of about \$12.6 million for 1997, including a substantial proportion for UNRWA's regular budget, would be paid before the end of this year.

The United States, UNRWA's largest single cash donor country, announced \$7.5 million in additional funds for the agency in 1997, including \$1.5 million in emergency assistance for Lebanon. The Netherlands and Germany each pledged about \$1 million. Italy pledged about \$900,000 and Spain about \$500,000. Luxembourg announced that it would consider pledging an additional amount in the next few weeks.

According to Mr. Hansen, representatives of 26 donor nations also discussed the agency's 1998-1999 fiscal

budgets which were estimated at \$312 million each year, with an extra annual \$30 million in-kind contributions allocated for food and pharmaceutical supplies.

Throughout the past week, Palestinian refugees took to the streets protesting against the austerity measures imposed by the agency.

Demonstrators, represented by UNRWA school students, political activists, members of Parliament and agency staff representatives, staged sit-ins in front of UNRWA's Amman offices calling for the implementation of the United Nations Resolution 194 that calls for the return of Palestinians to their homeland.

The protests came amid fears that UNRWA budget cuts are a step towards per-

manently settling the refugees in exile.

At Wednesday's press conference, Mr. Hansen ruled out accusations that donor countries "are plotting to reduce their contributions to the agency in order to end its mandate."

"I can understand there is a fertile ground for such theories. But I have absolutely no indication in any of my contacts with the donors that there is any such policy behind the difficulties in providing enough money for UNRWA's budget," stressed Mr. Hansen.

Following the agency's decision to cancel part of the service cutbacks, UNRWA staff representatives appeared sceptical that the new changes are a lasting solution and voiced fear that the austerity measures will resurface in the future.

"Covering the agency's budget deficit is but a fraction of the problem. After this December, the whole crisis will reappear," a member of UNRWA's staff committee told the Jordan Times Wednesday.

The commissioner general asserted that the agency will continue serving the refugees until their problem is solved.

He also reiterated the need for Arab countries to increase their contributions, which currently amount to one per cent of UNRWA's income.

Also on Wednesday, Mr. Hansen met with Minister of Foreign Affairs Fayez Tarawneh and discussed the financial crisis of UNRWA whose mandate addresses humanitarian and social aspects that touch upon the deprivation suffered by the Palestinian refugees.

U.N. draft to help Iraq make up quota

(Continued from page 1)

approved a plan in early August for the distribution of supplies bought with the proceeds. This meant oil sales were, in effect, running two months behind schedule.

Iraq has repeatedly complained that the arrival and distribution of food and medicine has lagged behind the sale of its oil. It has blamed the U.N. Secretariat and the U.S. and British members of the council's Sanctions Committee for delaying the processing of contracts for supplies.

The resolution was submitted by British U.N. envoy Sir John Weston.

The resolution would note Iraq's decision not to export oil during the period from June 8 to August 13 and express deep concern over the "humanitarian consequences for the Iraqi people resulting from that decision," since the shortfall in oil revenues would delay the provision of humanitarian relief.

The draft made clear that this would be a one-time exemption.

Hizbollah, Israel start negotiating on remains

(Continued from page 1)

A dozen Israeli commandos were killed last Friday when the heavily armed team was ambushed after landing on the Lebanese coast well north of its occupation zone. Many of the Israelis were ripped apart when explosives they were carrying detonated.

The ICRC head in Lebanon, Jean Jacques Fresard, met Hizbollah officials at the headquarters on Wednesday, the Islamist organisation said in a later

statement. Mr. Fresard delivered a message from Israel to Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri regarding the human remains on Tuesday.

The Hizbollah guerrillas, who had been joined by Amal militiamen and Lebanese soldiers in the fighting, displayed body parts left behind by the retreating Israelis to reporters 10 hours after the Friday clash.

The remains included a face and various limbs, including about five legs.

"According to my infor-

mation, the biggest number of remains and body parts is with the Islamic Resistance [Hizbollah]," Sheikh Nasrallah said when asked about reports other forces also had pieces of the bodies.

"There are the remains of a number of soldiers," he said. "There are a number of feet, which clearly indicates that the remains do not belong to one soldier."

The Israeli losses were their most serious in a single engagement in Lebanon since it pulled the bulk of its 1982 invasion force out in

1985, retaining only the 15-km deep strip of Lebanese territory adjoining the Israeli border.

In the wake of the failed operation, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had to call on his cabinet colleagues to stop public discussion of a unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon.

Israel, which has had a presence in Lebanon since a 1978 invasion, has maintained the occupation is necessary to protect its northern border from cross-border attacks.

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Kuwait drawing up new tax law

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwait's Finance Ministry is drawing up a new tax law to update the existing tax system, but it has yet to present any proposals to parliament or the cabinet, a senior ministry official has said.

"The draft tax law is still in the final stages of preparation in the ministry and has not been sent to the cabinet," assistant undersecretary Fawzi Suleyman Al Qasir told the official news agency KUNA.

Mr. Qasir denied a report in the newspaper Al Qabas that the government has sent a draft law to parliament, which proposed introducing income tax on Kuwaitis and expatriates in this Gulf state for the first time.

Parliamentary sources and officials have also denied the report, but one official said the ministry was reviewing existing tax laws, including assessing all possibilities such as introducing personal income tax.

The government has said it plans to amend the current tax regime which imposes a top rate of 55 per cent on the profits of foreign firms operating in Kuwait. Local firms are exempt and there are no personal

taxes. The changes which the government has suggested up to now include reducing the top rate of tax to 30 per cent, and possibly introducing income tax on local companies.

Mr. Qasir said the ministry "will seek advice from specialist agencies related to the draft law once it is prepared and before taking any decision in this regard."

According to Al Qabas, the draft law had been approved by the cabinet and envisaged a sliding scale of taxes on firms and individuals, both Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis, ranging from five to 30 per cent.

The newspaper report said personal taxes would only start after the first 2,000 dinars (\$6,500) in annual income. The Kuwaiti government depends on oil earnings for more than 80 per cent of its revenues, while taxes on foreign firms account for a small fraction of government income.

Because of fears this may undermine generous subsidies of services and lead to job losses.

Meanwhile, a senior finance ministry official said the government backs a recommendation

from the World Bank to set up an office to oversee the privatisation of public utilities in Kuwait.

Undersecretary Abdul Mohsen Al Hunaif said the government asked his ministry and state-owned fund manager Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) to draw up a preliminary study on setting up the privatisation office.

"In two to three weeks, I hope we will be able to submit the report to the government," Mr. Hunaif told AFP.

The study was requested by the cabinet after their weekly meeting, in line with recommendations originally put forward by the World Bank in a 1993 report.

In line with other World Bank recommendations, KIA has sold off stakes worth more than 800 million dinars (\$2.6 billion) in some 23 companies on behalf of the government since 1994.

Most of those firms were originally privately owned but fell into state hands when the government stepped in to shore up the economy after a share market crash in the 1980s.

"But this office will look to other parts of privatisation, to the utilities: electricity, telecom-

munications, other services now being (operated) by ministries and government bodies," Mr. Hunaif said.

"I think I can say considering that the government wants to open an office that it shows... the government is committed to having a greater role from the private sector in running these utilities," he added.

A parliamentary panel is currently reviewing a draft law that would provide the framework to privatising state-owned utilities.

But progress has been slow as members of parliament have been weighing up the impact on employment and on fees for services.

Mr. Hunaif said the law is now in the final stages of discussion, and could be approved in the next session of the National Assembly, or parliament, due to start in October.

"The (privatisation) programme will be implemented with the coordination of the National Assembly and the government," Mr. Hunaif stressed.

The KIA-managed sell-offs have been well received, but plans to sell public utilities have raised questions, particularly from members of parliament.

REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates

Prices as at 10/09/97 18:28

	US Dollar	GB Sterling	JP Yen	CHF Franc	IT Lira	FR Franc
US Dollar	1.0000	0.6936	160.93	0.6557	1,936.27	6.5595
GB Sterling	1.4418	1.0000	160.93	0.9453	2,791.91	9.3607
JP Yen	0.0062	0.0062	1.0000	0.0040	333.33	1.1036
CHF Franc	1.5400	1.0600	250.00	1.0000	1,336.03	4.3750
IT Lira	0.0005	0.0005	3.0000	0.0007	1.0000	3.3333
FR Franc	0.1513	0.1063	1.6667	0.2293	33.3333	1.0000

Middle Eastern Currencies

	US Dollar	GB Sterling	JP Yen	CHF Franc	IT Lira	FR Franc
US Dollar	1.0000	0.6936	160.93	0.6557	1,936.27	6.5595
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FR Franc	0.1513	0.1063	1.6667	0.2293	33.3333	1.0000

Energy

	US Dollar	GB Sterling	JP Yen	CHF Franc	IT Lira	FR Franc
US Dollar	1.0000	0.6936	160.93	0.6557	1,936.27	6.5595
GB Sterling	1.4418	1.0000	160.93	0.9453	2,791.91	9.3607
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Mid-East Currencies

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IT Lira	0.0005	0.0005	3.0000	0.0007	1.0000	3.3333
FR Franc	0.1513	0.1063	1.6667	0.2293	33.3333	1.0000

Metal Prices

	US Dollar	GB Sterling	JP Yen	CHF Franc	IT Lira	FR Franc
US Dollar	1.0000	0.6936	160.93	0.6557	1,936.27	6.5595
GB Sterling	1.4418	1.0000	160.93	0.9453	2,791.91	9.3607
JP Yen	0.0062	0.0062	1.0000	0.0040	333.33	1.1036
CHF Franc	1.5400	1.0600	250.00	1.0000	1,336.03	4.3750
IT Lira	0.0005	0.0005	3.0000	0.0007	1.0000	3.3333
FR Franc	0.1513	0.1063	1.6667	0.2293	33.3333	1.0000

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)

	US Dollar	GB Sterling	JP Yen	CHF Franc	IT Lira	FR Franc
US Dollar	1.0000	0.6936	160.93	0.6557	1,936.27	6.5595
GB Sterling	1.4418	1.0000	160.93	0.9453	2,791.91	9.3607
JP Yen	0.0062	0.0062	1.0000	0.0040	333.33	1.1036
CHF Franc	1.5400	1.0600	250.00	1.0000	1,336.03	4.3750
IT Lira	0.0005	0.0005	3.0000	0.0007	1.0000	3.3333
FR Franc	0.1513	0.1063	1.6667	0.2293	33.3333	1.0000

Main Equity Indices

	US Dollar	GB Sterling	JP Yen	CHF Franc	IT Lira	FR Franc
US Dollar	1.0000	0.6936	160.93	0.6557	1,936.27	6.5595
GB Sterling	1.4418	1.0000	160.93	0.9453	2,791.91	9.3607
JP Yen	0.0062	0.0062	1.0000	0.0040	333.33	1.1036
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IT Lira	0.0005	0.0005	3.0000	0.0007	1.0000	3.3333
FR Franc	0.1513	0.1063	1.6667	0.2293	33.3333	1.0000

Energy

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* JOD Cross Rates

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IT Lira	0.0005	0.0005	3.0000	0.0007	1.0000	3.3333
FR Franc	0.1513	0.1063	1.6667	0.2293	33.3333	1.0000

Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1997

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Your boss or some other older person is watching. He or she is favourably impressed with what you've done. The money you've been wanting is coming in soon. Use it to finish paying a debt. That's like priming the pump. It helps to get that money flowing.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) A couple of small problems may come up early in the morning, but you'll take care of them easily. You'll hardly break stride. You're super-empowered today. You're efficient, effective and very good looking. Other people want to know who you are and what you're doing. Shine. **GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) No matter what you want, there's a way to get it. Don't box yourself in. You're aware of what you know and what you don't know, right? Those are only two categories of knowledge. A far more interesting category contains the things you don't know. Get a coach.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You are really high-powered today. You still have a problem at work, but that's all right. It's not stopping you. You can't solve everything. Some things you have to just find a way around. With the help of a more experienced person, anything possible.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) It's a good day for doing business, so do just as much of it as you possibly can. There are problems about going on a trip, anyway. Something will come up that gets in the way. Your mate could be in a possessive mood tonight. Plan a cozy interlude in a private setting.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) There will be a couple of hassles in the morning. Money you're expecting may have been delayed. The check in the mail is still out there somewhere. It is coming, so don't despair. Your spirits are high and you're determined to succeed. You're strong, so push. You will win.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Start laying the ground-

work for a new project. There's a lot of preparation to be done. You won't have much time to play, but that's OK. If you can get all your chores handled now, the weekend will be much more enjoyable. Meanwhile, your love life is getting more intense.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Everything is clicking. You're in a good mood and your energy level is high. You have a gentle quality you haven't had for a while because you've been concentrating so intently. Now, you're starting to see some progress. Relax and make more time for love.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You're still struggling, but you're learning. As the day goes on, things start to make sense. Some of the assignments you've received lately seem absolutely pointless. They weren't. When you look at the big picture, you'll see that everything has a good reason.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) A household matter needs your attention first thing this morning. Later in the day, you'll be very lucky. Work goes well. You don't have quite enough money to do what you'd like tonight. No problem. Think of another way. You've never been a quitter, so why start now?

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) If you have a nagging feeling in the back of your head, check it out. You may be trying to remind yourself of something you've forgotten. You're being squeezed, that's true. But it won't kill you. Actually, these conditions are making you stronger.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Squeeze in a luncheon date with friends. If you're working together on a project, so much the better. You'll have lots of fun, and do a great deal of good. Meanwhile, a person you know well is offering excellent advice. Ignore the nagging tone of voice and soak it up.

Birthstone of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n' Jeff



THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS

1 Irrigate

6 First name in spydom

10 Simon's "— Spangled Girl"

14 Role for Madonna

15 Cockeyed

16 Fast food order words

17 Italian

18 Funny Buzzi

19 War god

20 Little Bo Peep's charge?

21 Hackman/Washington movie

24 Mets' home

25 Actress McClanahan

26 As one

29 Got fraudulently

34 Pipe type

35 Western Indians

36 Bruin great

37 Beatles' song/movie

41 Baseball's Brando or Maglie

42 Bull Run participants

43 Louvre locale

44 Muscle enhancers

47 Binges

48 Dine

49 "Death on the —"

50 Garner/O'Brien movie

55 Plead

56 Bucket

59 — a one

60 Musical Minnie

62 Lear

63 Merriment

64 One-time Greek colony

65 Require

66 Emulates Betsy

67 Over

DOWN

1 "The Way We —"

2 Acknowledge

3 Type of bomb?

4 Timetable abbr.

5 South-of-the-border cowpoke

6 Ave —

7 Grad

8 Preschoolers

9 Adege

10 Articulated

11 Actress Spelling

12 Long in the tooth

13 Williams' "The — Tattoo"

22 Color of Mars

23 Sister

24 Close tightly

26 Bottomless pit

27 Dickens' "Expectations"

28 Lunar valley

29 Tackle remains

30 Entanglements

31 French river

32 Ford or Pyle

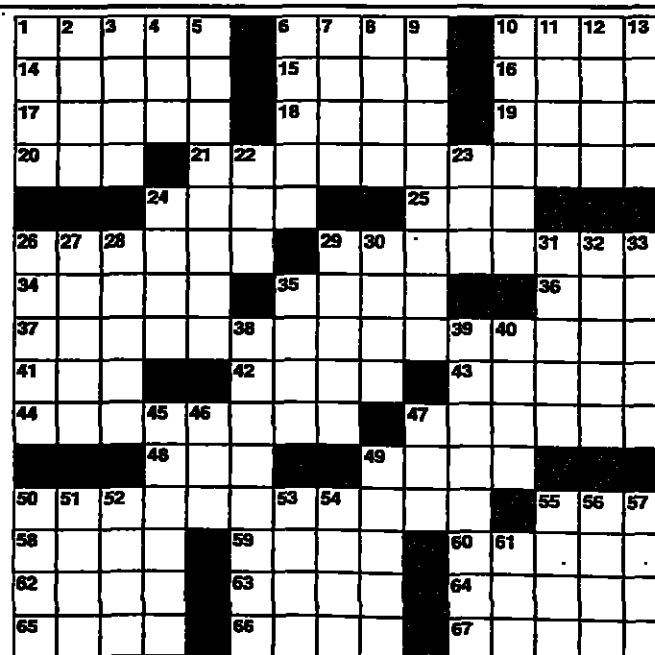
33 — rehearsal

35 Second-hand

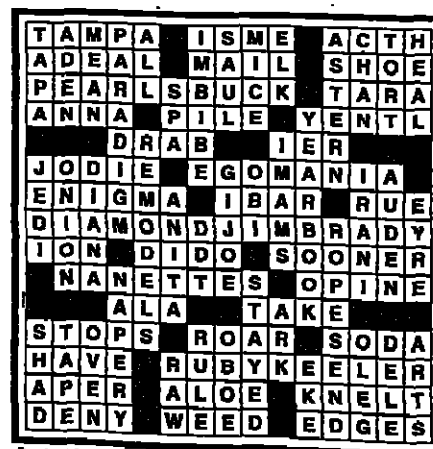
38 Literary works

39 Excellent

40 Like a blue moon



by Kenneth Witte



Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Government intends to lower land transport charges between Aqaba and Baghdad by about JD3

THE GOVERNMENT intends to lower the land transport charges between Aqaba and Baghdad by about JD3 from the present JD16 (\$22.5) level. A government source told Al Ra'i that a decision will soon be issued to lower the charges in light of studies conducted by the Ministry of Transport in this regard. The studies compared land transport charges between other neighbouring countries and Baghdad with those between Aqaba and the Iraqi capital.

The source said that the reduction was a government objective to consolidate the competitive edge of the Jordanian land transport sector and to rehabilitate the port of Aqaba to be also competitive with others that are eligible to become a port of transit for goods destined to Iraq. Baghdad has left the choice open for international companies to choose the most suitable port for delivering goods to Iraq from the pricing point of view.

Meanwhile, Ports Corporation Director General Mohammad Al Dalabeh ruled out any reduction in the short-term on loading and unloading fees. He indicated that the reductions enacted a while ago were more competitive and attractive than many charged in other ports of the region.

Captain Dalabeh gave an example by pointing out that lowering fees on containers raised the number of containers arriving at Aqaba to 104,000 during the first eight months of this year from 83,000 containers during the same period of 1996. "However, the corporation continues to study the level of fees applied in other ports in order to maintain the highest level of competitiveness and attractiveness," he said.

The director general revealed that the volume of imports and exports that passed through Aqaba during the first eight months of this year was about 7.6 million tonnes compared to 7.5 million tonnes during the same period of 1996. He said that the volume of exports rose from 184,000 tonnes to 264,000 tonnes noting that mining exports accounted for a large part of the exports.

He said that phosphate exports amounted to 2.9 million tonnes, a difference of 200,000 tonnes from the volume during the first eight months of last year. Cement exports were 241,000 tonnes (94,000 tonnes in 1996) and those of potash and fertiliser were 888,000 tonnes and 428,000 tonnes respectively (Al Ra'i).

Earnings from telecommunications sector exceed JD200 million

EARNINGS FROM the telecommunications sector in Jordan exceed JD200 million and, as such, the telecommunications services are the highest contributor to the gross national product, Youssef Abu Jamous, director general of the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission, has said. He noted that the earnings were achieved from a network of 385,000 line in a country whose population is 4.2 million.

Mr. Abu Jamous indicated that the available technology, administrative experience, work concession and the sector's efficiency is underdeveloped than many of the other rich countries. Consequently, this situation necessitates that the restructuring process of this sector be absolutely correct," he stressed. The director general said much has been done in such a very short time but still there is a lot to do. "Jordan has set competitive but well coordinated objectives that were real in terms of what could be achieved," he added.

Mr. Abu Jamous concluded: "This step has placed Jordan at the forefront of development in the Middle East." He noted that the Kingdom is progressing rapidly to become a centre for knowledge and a base for skills (Al Aswaq).

Jordan, Yemeni businessmen to set up \$3m joint company

SANAA (Petra) — Private sector businessmen from Yemen and Jordan have decided to set up a \$3 million joint company to undertake different economic, trade and other activities in the two countries and abroad.

The announcement was made by the founders of the company: Salman Al Qudah from Jordan and Abdullah Mohammad Al Kholani from Yemen who said that the \$3 million initial capital may increase depending on the company's future activities. The \$3 million capital is shared equally by the two sides.

Noting that the company's head office will be in

Amman with a branch office to be opened in Sanaa, the announcement said that the heads of governments of Yemen and Jordan will be initiating the agreement. They also pointed out that the founders of the joint company will take a month to study details of the full agreement and include proposals and amendments to the final draft.

According to the announcement, the joint company's activities will cover marketing of agricultural products within Yemen and Jordan, conducting land, air and maritime transport operations, transporting passengers, providing health and ther-

apeutic treatment, organising trade fairs, undertaking tourism-related activities and other tasks related to economic and services sectors.

In their announcement the founders said that the creation of the company was a translation of the two countries' declared desire to further bolster relations and in line with the Jordanian and Yemeni government's efforts to increase exchanged trade between them.

They said that Amman was chosen to house the head office was due to the central geographical location of the Kingdom.

Jordan's stock sell-off plan to speed up in 1998

By Suleiman Khalidi Reuters

AMMAN — The head of Jordan's state investment body said Wednesday he expected it to accelerate divesting its vast stock portfolio in 1998 as foreign and local demand picks up. "If there is demand and... more interaction in the process of foreign and local investment then the corporation's role would be to increase its activity to meet and satisfy this demand," Mohammad Batayneh, director general of the state invest-

ment arm Jordan Investment Corp. (JIC), told Reuters.

Mr. Batayneh said the state's divestment programme of its stock portfolio in 1998 would be decided by year-end, adding that he expected it would expand from what has so far been sold as investor demand grows for Jordanian equity.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have been pushing Jordan to divest state holdings to the private sector, a key component of a privatisation drive and IMF-directed structural reforms.

"We are progressing ahead in the programme to sell and divest some of our stock," said Mr. Batayneh, referring to JIC's vast portfolio. JIC and the state pension fund alone own nearly 40 per cent of Amman Financial Market's total capitalisation of \$4.7 billion.

Mr. Batayneh shrugged off investor criticism of slowness in the sell-off and blamed lack of knowledge and insufficient demand by investors since JIC began in 1995 to offer stakes in a diversified range of over 60 listed companies.

"We have no reservations at all, but we offered our holdings more than once either by direct contacts or advertising," Mr. Batayneh said, adding that JIC had not turned back any investor who had shown real interest in acquiring shares.

But JIC was not interested in divesting its portfolio just for the sake of it and wanted the right type of investor in certain industries, he said.

JIC has put on offer a variety of publicly listed shares since the sale of a

majority stake in 1995 in the InterContinental Hotel, the first successful sale of a major asset to be put on the privatisation block.

Mr. Batayneh said JIC had this year alone sold minority holdings of five per cent and less in 18 publicly-listed companies either through the stock exchange and, or, directly to investors.

Mr. Batayneh denied some investor criticism that JIC was food-dragging in implementing the government's declared privatisation policy.

"There are no obstacles from inside JIC towards this subject because this is a political decision and we are executors of this decision (privatisation policy)," said Mr. Batayneh whose board of directors is headed by the minister of finance.

But he said JIC, with World Bank advice and expertise of a newly set-up state privatisation unit now in charge of charting policy, was seeking more innovative ways to target specific foreign investors to achieve better results.

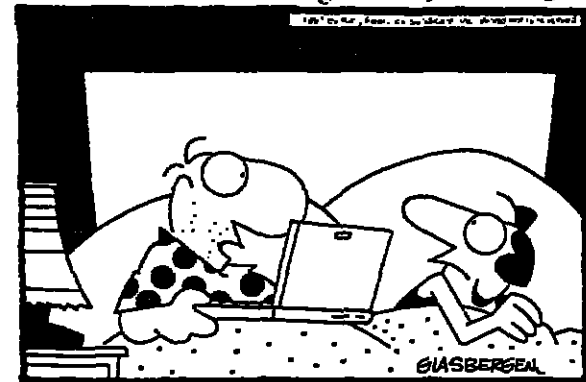
The latest offering to foreign and local investors was up to 51 per cent of the government's share in the Irbid Electricity Co., part of a move to privatise the power sector.

JIC was also putting on sale a 70 per cent stake in a 314-room transit hotel close to the international airport and was still committed to complete the sale of a 33 per cent stake in Jordan Cement Factories by year-end.

Officials say the government also intends to speed privatisation of state utilities such as electricity, water and the state airlines by restructuring and splitting large enterprises.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - 607171 / 607179											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 10/09/1997											
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV. %	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF SEASONS	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	
346,000	239,500	ARAB BANK	15.5	1.19	15	620	208950	336.00	337.00	1.00	+
2,340	1,680	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	5.2	0.00	35	128291	230505	1.96	1.98	0.02	+
1,210	890	MID-EAST TRV. BK.	59.1	0.00	3	2450	2205	90	90	0	0
2,480	1,150	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	9.9	7.03	3	3087	6915	2.24	2.25	0.01	+
1,200	600	THE HOUSING BK.	14.5	4.00	8	12665	61356	4.85	4.85	0	0
4,180	2,440	JOR. KUNAWIT BK.	11.3	0.00	8	6301	20038	3.18	3.18	0	0
1,050	760	JOR. GULF BK.	4.6	9.09	4	16800	44650	1.77	1.77	0	0
1,870	1,450	ARAB JOR. INV. BK.	17.1	0.00	3	14600	51830	3.60	3.55	0.05	-
4,050	2,520	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	15.7	3.11	8	12400	48264	3.90	3.86	0.04	-
1,680	1,110	UNION BK. INV.	0.00	0.00	4	1850	2222	1.34	1.20	0.14	-
3,800	1,080	JOR. INV. FIN. BANK	21.9	0.00	1	50	170	3.38	3.40	0.02	+
2,320	940	BEIT AL-HAL (BEITNA)	6	16.85	9	3650	3273	0.94	0.89	0.05	-
BANK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 240.46	%CHG: +0.26	103	243964	700398				
4,550	3,800	JERUSALEM INSUR.	10.7	5.06	1	250	988	3.95	3.95	0	0
2,210	1,590	JOR. PRIME INSUR.	4.9	8.62	1	3000	5220	1.74	1.74	0	0
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 114.70	%CHG: 0.00	2	3250	6208				
1,820	1,558	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	8.5	5.65	176	150200	266154	1.75	1.77	0.02	+
2,100	1,320	IRBID ELECTRICITY	13.2	5.20	1	100	221	2.10	2.21	0.11	+
7,050	6,000	VEHICLE OWNERS FED.	7.9	4.83	5	16696	121046	7.25	7.25	0	0
3,050	2,280	SHIPPING LINES	16.3	4.64	1	500	1400	2.80	2.80	0	0
1,550	930	NATL. PORTFOLIO	0	0.00	13	7300	10459	1.44	1.43	0.01	-
1,790	1,150	JOR. RENT HOTELS	19.2	0.00	5	1850	12155	2.58	2.60	0.02	+
3,720	2,890	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	9.0	0.00	26	12550	42605	3.37	3.43	0.06	+
1,220	930	SARKA EDUCATION	9	0.00	7	7500	7705	1.06	1.02	0.04	-
2,230	1,630	UNION LAND DEV.	8.3	0.00	12	3000	5232	1.73	1.74	0.01	+
1,010	940	UNION LAND DEV.	9	0.00	4	7000	5160	0.74	0.74	0	0
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 112.31	%CHG: +0.42	249	206696	462301				
1,100	930	ATTARAGES	9	0.00	1	800	800	1.00	1.00	0	0
4,450	3,220	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	26.2	2.83	26	11968	46550	3.89	3.89	0	0
7,050	5,400	ARAB POTASH CO.	12.2	3.25	4	5250	3151	6.00	6.10	0.10	+
10,750	9,070	JOR. PETROL REFINERY	10.5	8.16	29	6916	74719	10.72	10.85	0.13	+
1,470	1,050	WOLLEN INDUSTRIES	9.7	8.93	12	7850	8854	1.14	1.12	0.02	-
2,160	1,620	INDUSTRIAL COM. ANGL.	8.8	0.00	4	971	1621	1.70	1.68	0.02	-
7,150	5,800	JOR. HORSTED HILLS	11.0	2.92	6	1400	9618	6.90	6.85	0.05	-
4,420	3,040	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	12.7	4.35	38	18588	87717	4.42	4.40	0.02	-
1,580	1,150	ARAB ALUM. IND.	10.5	0.00	2	928	2410	2.58	2.60	0.02	+
1,530	1,050	RAPHA INDUSTRIES	13.8	4.45	12	6222	34887	5.60	5.62	0.02	+
5,650	4,300	DAR ALBAHAR DV. INV.	10.5	0.00	2	500	593	2.12	2.37	0.25	+
3,850	2,220	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	9.9	0.00	17	17250	8163	0.47	0.47	0	0
1,290	1,000	ARAB PAPER CONV. TRD.	31.8	0.00	4	750	774	1.03	1.04	0.01	+
770	510	NATIONAL IND.	9	0.00	10	6400	2432	0.52	0.52	0	0
1,200	510	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	8	3700	2073	0.57	0.56	0.01	-
2,980	1,510	UNIV. CHEM. IND.	13.8	6.54	1	300	459	1.51	1.53	0.02	+
380	330	JOR. SULPHUR IND.	9	0.00	1	500	305	0.62	0.61	0.01	-
1,670	1,120	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	17.4	5.15	6	1400	1904	1.35	1.36	0.01	+
1,880	1,080	UNIV. HOOD. IND.	17	0.00	6	8050	10331	1.25	1.26	0.01	+
1,510	910	JOR. UNIS. INDUSTRIES	12.2	10.00	8	1200	1521	1.88	1.88	0	0
1,620	1,300	NATL. CHELORINE	14.9	4.43	17	216750	346464	1.58	1.58	0	0
1,070	810	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	15.2	0.00	19	8800	7323	0.83	0.83	0	0
2,990	1,340	EL - SAY RABY DEAR	55.6	0.00	1	50	79	1.58	1.54	0.04	-
1,130	1,080	INTL. TOBACCO	6.4	0.00	3	1350	1580	1.17	1.19	0.02	+
1,160	860	UNION CH. & VEG.	51.8	0.00	8	12400	14086	1.12	1.14	0.02	+
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 122.34	%CHG: +0.93	247	341643	594521				
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 175.67	%CHG: +0.50	601	795553	1863427				
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 10/09/1997											
650	380	JOR. TRADE PAC.	10.4	0.00	6	5500	2145	0.38	0.39	0.01	+
950	540	JOR. FIN. INV. CO.	9	0.00	35	69174	43800	0.61	0.64	0.03	+
840	660	UNION INV. SOF	9	0.00	11	28500	6564	0.73	0.74	0.01	+
570	350	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	9	0.00	11	24700	9137	0.36	0.37	0.01	+
1,050	850	UNITED FOR FINAN. INV.	52.1	0.00	6	55000	55000	0.95	1.00	0.05	+
570	380	ARAB FIN. INV. TRD.	48.4	0.00	11	28500	11520	0.40	0.42	0.02	+
750	400	NATL. MULT. INV. MANICO	8.8	0.00	22	19500	8428	0.43	0.43	0	0
820	710	JORDAN STEEL	34.4	6.58	6	2228	2452	0.76	0.76	0	0
580	450	ARAB ELECT. IND.	8	0.00	2	2750	1265	0.47	0.46	0.01	-
730	580	MID-EAST PHARM. 75%	9	0.00	2	2500	2590	0.64	0.61	0.03	-
1,190	860	UNION TOBACCO 75%	9	0.00	4	1300	1170	1.14	1.15	0.01	+
720	550	RABY PHARM. 85%	8	0.00	4	2300	1179	0.31	0.31	0	0
570	290	INDS. SERG.	9	0.00	4	3900	1179	0.31	0.31	0	0
860	690	INDS. CERAMIC	18.1	0.00	1	500	345	0.69	0.69	0	0
820	590	NATL. POLYMER	9	0.00	5	500	3205	0.64	0.64	0	0
1,000	700	NAT. ALUMINIUM 75%	97.4	0.00	9	9050	4073	0.70	0.70	0	0
860	580	MID-EAST COMPLEX	7.5	16.39	20	24250	14458	0.59	0.61	0.02	+
GRAND TOTAL			162	284252	165314						

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



"I pay good money for 24-hour internet service. If I don't check my e-mail at 3:00 AM, then it's money wasted!"

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

FODOL

TOBAL

WALLOF

KITSCY

Print answer here: TO

Now arrange the coded letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answers tomorrow

Saturday's Jumbles: DAISY JUICE BEFORE UMBER
Answer: What they turned into when the visitors bowed - JEEB LEADERS

Graf returns in November

BALTIMORE (AFP) — Former World No. 1 Steffi Graf will make her return from knee surgery at a one-night charity exhibition against American Chanda Rubin here in November, organisers said.

Former WTA player Pam Shriver said Graf will be the main lure for her 12th annual charity exhibition event here on November 25, two days after the end of the WTA Championships in New York.

Graf won the season-ending WTA event last year but apparently will not defend her title, preferring a slower comeback.

Graf said at the U.S. Open she was uncertain when she would return but was targeting her rehabilitation efforts to be ready for the Australian Open in January.

"I saw Steffi at the Open and was delighted to find her excited about coming back to the tour," Shriver said. "It's very special to be able to have her begin her comeback in Baltimore."

Graf, 28, had knee surgery in June and missed most of this season while Swiss 16-year-old sensation Martina Hingis has moved to the top of the women's tennis world, winning three Grand Slam titles and missing a Slam sweep by losing in the French Open finals.

Hingis won the U.S. Open title Sunday, beating 17-year-old American prodigy Venus Williams in the final. "I'm sure after seeing all the young talent playing so well at the Open she is inspired," event chairman Billie Jean King said. "By November 25 she probably won't be able to wait to play."

Graf said at the Open she had been undergoing rehabilitation in Austria, and had started to run and cycle. She said she hadn't really started hitting the ball, since she doesn't have enough range of movement.



Steffi Graf

Fans give Fayed standing ovation

LONDON (AFP) — Mohammad Al Fayed was given a standing ovation by football fans Tuesday when he made his first public appearance since the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales.

The owner of Harrods, whose son Dodi died in the same crash in which the Princess was killed, was given a rapturous reception as he walked to the centre of the pitch before Fulham's second division match against Plymouth.

His spokesman addressed the crowd, thanking them on Fayed's behalf for their messages of support.

Fayed then took a pace forward and said simply: "I just want to say, thank you and God bless you all." Fayed, chairman of Fulham, listened to a lone piper play a special lament, which was followed by a minute's silence before kick-off.

All proceeds from the match were being donated to the memorial fund set up following the princess's death. Supporters arriving for the match paused to inspect floral tributes at the ground's gates. Books of condolence were placed around the ground for supporters to sign.

Guidi takes over lead in Tour of Spain

JEREZ DE LA FRONTERA, Spain (AFP) — Italy's Fabrizio Guidi took over the leader's yellow jersey in the Tour of Spain following Tuesday's fourth stage.

The 192.5-kilometre leg from Huelva was won in a sprint by Spaniard Eleuterio Anguita, who held off Italy's Claudio Camin and Jan Svoboda of the Czech Republic in the battle for the line.

Anguita, 25, is the first Spaniard to win a Tour of Spain stage since Marino Alonso in 1994.

Guidi, who moved from fifth to third on Monday, has the same time as Denmark's Lars Michaelson at the head of the overall standings after Tuesday's stage, but leads by virtue of his consistently higher places in the race so far.

The Italian, who is on the

way back after injuring his collar-bone in August during the Tour of Denmark, admitted his surprise at having suddenly moved to the front of the field.

"I've done nothing so far and now I'm in yellow. We'll see what happens tomorrow," Guidi said.

Anguita moved up to third overall with victory. "It's not my victory it's the team's," said the Toscani rider. "I'm third without even having thought about it."

Michaelson fell for the second time in the race, crashing on a bend close to the finish along with, among others, Italian Claudio Chiappucci. The Dane had already fallen in a sprint during the second stage.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Everton target Greek ace

LIVERPOOL (AFP) — Everton chief Howard Kendall, desperate for a major signing to appease frustrated fans, has targeted Greek star Zisis Vrizas. Kendall, who has just returned from a weekend trip to Athens where Everton lost 4-1 to Panathinaikos in a friendly, made an inquiry about the PAOK Salonika striker while he was in Greece. Vrizas played under Kendall when the Everton chief had a six-month spell with Xanthi two years ago, but he has since been transferred to PAOK. Now Kendall reckons that Vrizas could be the player to end his lengthy search for a strike partner for Duncan Ferguson. Kendall plans to watch the Greek international in PAOK's UEFA Cup clashes with Arsenal later this month. "He is a player I admired when I was out in Greece," said Kendall. "When we were in Athens at the weekend, I inquired whether he was available."

Italy ready for Sweden

ROME (AFP) — Italy's new tennis captain Paolo Bertolucci named a four-man squad on Tuesday for their Davis Cup semi-final against Sweden. Bertolucci, replacing Adriano Panatta who quit as Italy's non-playing skipper, called up Renzo Furlan, Marzio Martelli, Omar Camporese and Diego Nargiso for the match at Norrköping from September 19-21. Sweden, who lost last year's final to France at Malmö, will be fielding Jonas Björkman, Thomas Enqvist, Magnus Larsson and Nicklas Pietrangeli.

Fettis heads for Blackburn

BLACKBURN (AFP) — Nottingham Forest goalkeeper Alan Fettis is set to join Premiership leaders Blackburn Rovers. The clubs have agreed a 300,000 pound (about \$480,000) fee and Northern Ireland international Fettis is currently undergoing a medical.

Fettis found himself relegated down the pecking order at Forest following the summer arrival of Swiss star Marco Pascolo and was transferred after manager Dave Bassett was unable to give him any assurances regarding his first team future at the first division club. Blackburn need a second goalkeeper to back up Tim Flowers after Australian John Filan suffered a broken arm last month and faces up to 12 months on the sidelines.

Fish move tangled in red tape

BOLTON (AFP) — South African star Mark Fish will not make his debut for Bolton against Arsenal on Saturday after his move to the Premiership club from Lazio became tangled in red tape. Fish, 23, has flown back to South Africa to train with his former club Orlando Pirates while Bolton wait for his work permit following his two million pound (about \$3.2 million) transfer from the Italian club.

Bolton spokesman Alan Fullelove said: "It's looking unlikely that he will be able to play on Saturday. Mark has flown home because you can't get a work permit while you are in this country. It's a red tape thing and he will stay away until we receive it." Manager Colin Todd added: "I can't tell when it will come. All the paperwork has been done and we have just got to be patient."

Adams set for Arsenal return

LONDON (AFP) — Arsenal star Tony Adams is set for a long-awaited return to action in Saturday's Premiership clash against Bolton after a five-month injury ordeal. The England defender missed the end of last season with an ankle injury and has yet to figure in the first team this term. But he put himself in line for a recall after coming through a reserve game against Southampton at Highbury on Tuesday. He played the full 90 minutes after which he declared himself happy with his fitness. "The game went well and I feel fine," Adams said. "I will train on Thursday and I am hopeful for Saturday, although the manager will make the decision."

Yeboah move stalled

BONN (AFP) — Tony Yeboah's move from Leeds to German club Hamburg hit a new obstacle on Tuesday when it emerged the Ghanaian international could face charges of tax evasion from his previous spell in Germany. Yeboah is reported to be the subject of an enquiry by German tax authorities who claim the player failed to pay around a million German marks (about \$555,000) in tax while playing for Eintracht Frankfurt in 1993. Yeboah is suspected of having concealed income of 2.3 million German marks received while playing for Eintracht. "This tax story could become a problem," admitted Hamburg director Werner Hackmann. "If we don't clear it up, the move will fall through." Leeds and Hamburg agreed a transfer fee of around one million pounds (\$1.6 million) for the 31-year-old last week.

Maradona's suspension lifted

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) — Argentine justice authorities Tuesday ordered the lifting of a suspension order imposed against football star Diego Maradona, according to an Argentine Football Association (AFA) official. The decision followed an appeal by Maradona's lawyers against the temporary suspension ordered after the football legend tested positive for an illegal substance last month. Maradona failed to appear before the AFA disciplinary committee Tuesday but was represented at the hearing by his lawyer and his manager who said they presented a statement the football star had written. Maradona tested positive after an August 24 Argentine League match in which he scored a penalty for his club Boca Juniors. The result was confirmed in a September 3 follow-up test. Maradona has admitted to a cocaine addiction but denied he used the drug to improve his game. He had already tested positive for drugs twice before: in 1991 when he was playing for Napoli and during the 1994 World Cup in the United States.

Olympic question: Should bid leader also guide 2004 planning?

ATHENS (AP) — The leader of Athens' successful bid for the 2004 Olympics hinted Tuesday that she may want to avoid a public battle over whether she stays in charge of the committee that organises the Summer Games.

Gianna Angelopoulos-Daskalaki, a lawyer and former parliament member who attained heroic status for bringing the Games back to their birthplace, said in an interview that running an Olympic organising committee is "a different role" from leading a bid.

"It's a very difficult task, different from the bidding process, completely different ... it's a huge responsibility," the first woman to lead a successful Olympic bid committee told the Associated Press.

Since beating Rome and three other cities last Friday in a vote by the international Olympic committee, Angelopoulos-Daskalaki has been the focus of speculation over her future.

Some important figures insist that the job should automatically be her's, other officials are less clear, hinting that too much is at stake to leave the Olympics in the hands of someone without experience organising major sporting events.

Angelopoulos-Daskalaki remains carefully diplomatic. But a possible added complication in the decision is that she served in parliament with the conservative New Democracy Party — now the main opposition to the socialist government of premier Costas Simitis, who could face pressure to appoint a party stalwart to the high-profile Olympic job.

The wife of a millionaire involved in shipping and steel, she repeatedly stressed her sense of accomplishment — which she described as "something like winning a war." She also, however, made note of the heavy pressures that accompanied the job.

"What I've done, I've done it fully committed, fully devoted — me, my husband, my people. I forgot all personal aspects of my life and I've done it," she said in her offices filled with still-fresh bouquets, a brick-size stack of congratulatory telegrams sat on a chair.

"But I'll say it again: I don't want anything in return," she added. "As everyone who worked (on the bid), we want to see that the games are successful. OK, but that doesn't mean I want this or that other role."

The Greek media have speculated that she wants to be an ambassador or eventually seek the mostly ceremonial Greek presidency. Angelopoulos-Daskalaki labelled those reports "nonsense."

Even if Angelopoulos-Daskalaki does not guide, the organising effort, her stamp on the undertaking is already felt. Many political leaders, including Athens' mayor, have praised her unruffled style and urged others to learn a lesson.

"In the bottom of my heart, I knew we would win. But I never, never expressed that to anybody," she said. "But it was not a silly kind of feeling ... or that I saw a dream or something, it was just a feeling that I was looking forward to the decision."

There also was a bit of superstition. In her purse, she carried the tie worn by the head of the bid committee from Sydney when they were awarded the 2000 Games. She also had a four-leaf clover someone had given her earlier in the day.

Raiders recover from devastating loss

ALAMEDA, California (AP) — After a night of praying and a morning of sharing their pain, the Oakland Raiders tried to recover Tuesday from yet another heartbreaking loss — and to deal with their defeat in public.

The Raiders lost 28-27 to bitter rival Kansas City on Monday night when Elvis Grbac threw a 33-yard scoring pass to Andre Rison with three seconds remaining, completing the Chiefs' rally from a 14-point deficit.

The loss left the Raiders winless under new coach Joe Bugel and struggling to deal with the disappointment of yet another close defeat.

"The last time I had hurt like that was when my mom died," Bugel said. "It was 59 minutes and 57 seconds of happiness, and then you just felt like someone cut your heart out."

Players lifted weights

and did running drills Tuesday, then talked among themselves about how to get over the pain of the loss.

"It's a hard one to swallow. If you didn't hurt, you shouldn't be here," said Jeff George, who had two scoring passes to Rickey Dudley but also threw two late interceptions — including an underhanded shovel pass returned 55 yards for a touchdown — in his Raiders home debut. "I think everybody should be hurting right now."

Oakland lost its season opener in overtime at Tennessee. Monday night was continued a string of close losses — all but one of the raiders' nine defeats last season was by a touchdown or less.

"These are the dog days," said Tim Brown, who caught 11 passes for 155 yards against the chiefs. "I think the team is somber right now, but I think

everybody is eager to go out and prove that we're the best 0-2 team in the league."

The Raiders closed their locker room to the media after the loss and Bugel refused to give the required post-game news conference. That could lead to a fine, and NFL spokesman Greg Aiello said Tuesday the league was looking into the situation and awaiting a response from the Raiders.

On Tuesday, Bugel began a news conference with a long apology to reporters.

"I couldn't even talk. I was beside myself," Bugel said of his feelings after the game. "I went back to my office, and before I knew it probably half the night was gone. I was speechless. I don't know if I had talked to the press if I would have been able to make any sense. I just hurt. I just hurt badly. It was a very empty feeling last night."

Dundee United dump Rangers out of League Cup

GLASGOW (AFP) — A stunning extra-time volley by Dundee United substitute Gary McSwegan consigned holders Rangers to a shock Scottish League Cup quarter-final exit at Ibrox Park on Tuesday night.

McSwegan's goal six minutes into extra-time gave United a 1-0 win over

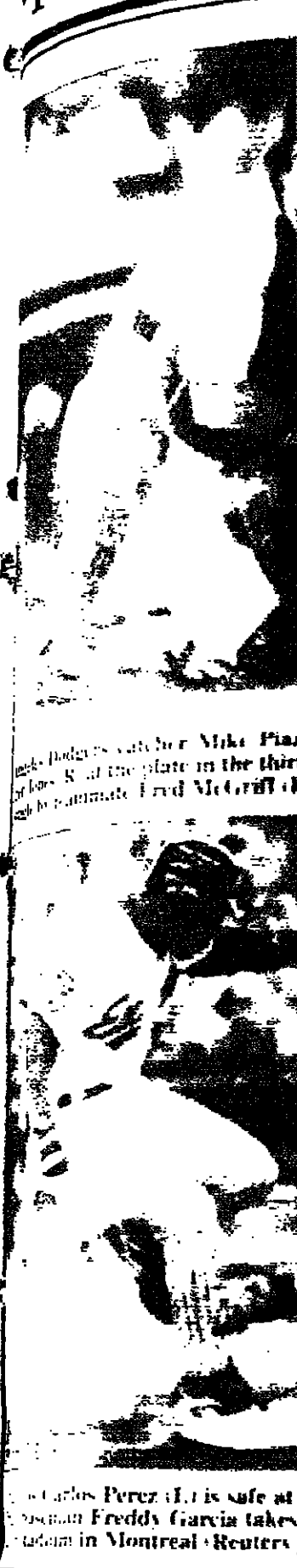
a Rangers team deprived of several internationals who were on World Cup duty.

The home side dominated throughout but could not find a way through a determined and well-organised United side, who snatched the tie with virtually their only shot on target.

Italian striker Marco

Negri, scorer of five goals against the same opposition last month, was held scoreless by the United defence.

Dunfermline Athletic also advanced to the semis with a 1-0 win over Hearts — thanks to a goal late in extra-time by Alan Moore.



Charles Perez (left) is safe at

when Freddy Garcia takes

in Montreal. Reuters

MAJOR LEAGUE

Baseball

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BRIEF

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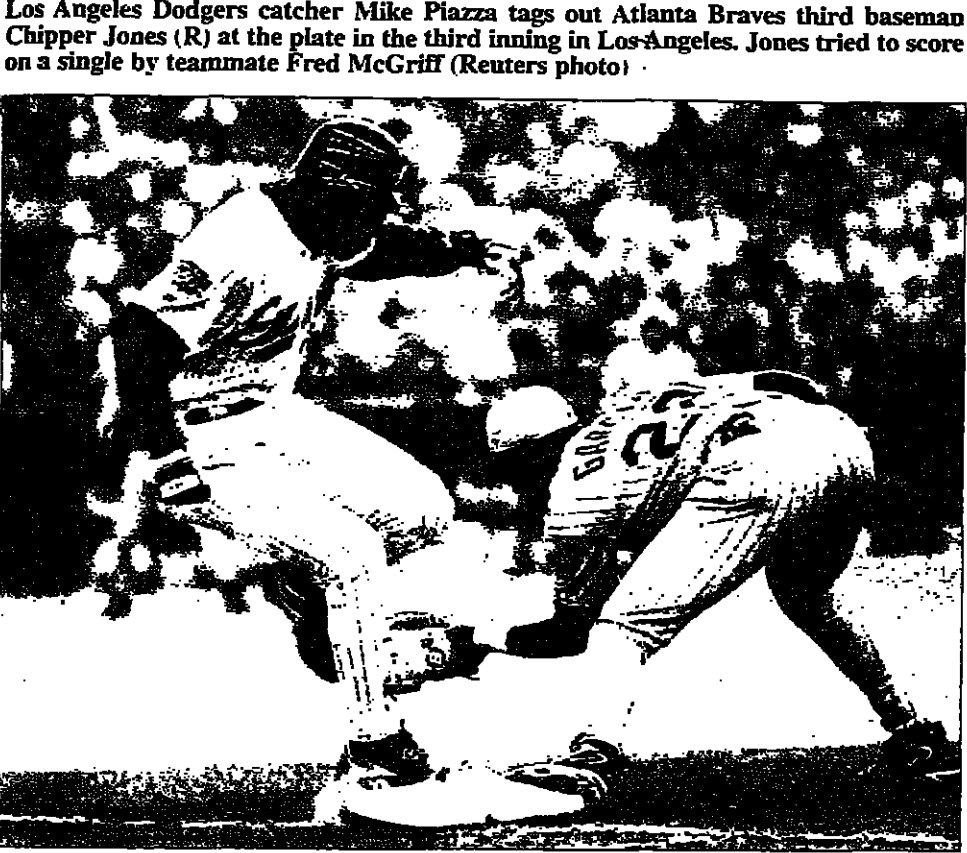
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Albert Costa easily wins at Marbella Open

MARBELLA (AP) — Top seed Albert Costa of Spain rolled to convincing win over countryman Fernando Vicente Tuesday in the first round of the \$328,000 Marbella Open. Costa defeated Vicente 6-1, 6-1 at the clay court tournament played at the Manolo Santana tennis club in this southern Spanish resort town. Second-seed Spaniard Bercastegui advanced into the second round after defeating Carlos Costa, 6-0, 6-3. The tournament's 3th seed Albert Portas of Spain struggled early on his way to defeating Spaniard Juan Antonio Viloca 3-6, 7-5, 6-2. In other matches, Guillaume Raouz of France defeated Emilio Sanchez of Spain, 6-1, 6-3 while Marcello Craca of Germany beat Gilbert Schaller of Austria, 6-3, 6-2.



Monteal Expos Carlos Perez (L) is safe at first on a third inning bunt as Pittsburgh Pirates first baseman Freddy Garcia takes the throw during National League action at Olympic Stadium in Montreal (Reuters photo)

MAJOR LEAGUE RESULTS					
National League			American League		
Cincinnati 5	Cubs 2		Detroit 4	Texas 0	
Montreal 5	Pittsburgh 4		Oakland 5	Minnesota 1	
Philadelphia 1	NY Mets 0		NY Yankees 8	Boston 6	
Houston 7	Colorado 4		Baltimore 9	Cleveland 3	
Atlanta 4	Los Angeles 3		Toronto 2	Anaheim 0	
San Diego 7	Florida 6		White Sox 4	Milwaukee 1	
St Louis 5	San Francisco 3		Seattle 4	Kansas City 3	

Tigers stop Rangers; A's win

DETROIT (AP) — Scott Sanders pitched a one-hitter, allowing only a fifth-inning single to Domingo Cedeño, for his first career shutout as the Detroit Tigers defeated the Texas Rangers 4-0 Tuesday. Sanders (5-12), just 1-6 with a 6.04 era in 10 previous starts with Detroit, struck out a season-high eight and walked one. Sanders retired the first 14 batters before Cedeño singled cleanly to left-center field with two outs in the fifth. Sanders set down the next 12 hitters before walking Tom Gooden in with two outs in the ninth. The right-hander's other win since the Tigers obtained him July 18 in a trade with Seattle was Aug. 9 at Toronto. His only other win as a starter this year was May 26 at Minnesota in his final start for the Mariners. Rookie Juan Encarnacion hit a two-run triple for the Tigers, who swept the two-game series and won for the ninth time in their last 12 games. Texas has lost five in a row, scoring just four runs in that span. Rick Helling (2-2) gave up six hits in 7 2-3 innings, but four came in the second inning when the Tigers scored all their runs. Athletics 5, Twins 1. In Minneapolis, Jimmy Haynes struck out a season-high nine batters and Dave Magadan and Ben Grieve each had a pair of RBI singles to lead the Oakland Athletics over the Minnesota Twins. Only 9,705 tickets were sold for the game, the second smallest Metrodome crowd this season. A season-low 9,363 tickets were purchased for Monday night's opener of the two-game series.

Kafelnikov, Henman advance in Tashkent

TASHKENT (AP) — Top seed Yevgeny Kafelnikov brushed off an early challenge by a hometown qualifier to win his opening match Tuesday in the inaugural President's Cup, a \$405,000 tournament on the ATP Tour. The Russian survived a four-game run by obscure challenger Dmitry Tomashchik that tied the first set at 4-4, delighting a capacity crowd of 3,000 in the newly opened Yunusabad tennis centre. Then Kafelnikov, just bumped down a spot to fourth in the world rankings by U.S. Open victor Patrick Rafter, quickly reasserted control to win 6-4, 6-2. Second seed Tim Henman had a tougher time with Thierry Champion of France before prevailing 6-

New tennis champs shine at U.S. Open

NEW YORK (AFP) — Two weeks ago it looked like Pete Sampras couldn't lose and Pat Rafter couldn't win. But the 1997 U.S. Open tennis championships didn't turn out that way. Rafter became the first Australian in 24 years to win the U.S. Open, outdueling unseeded Briton Greg Rusedski 6-3, 6-2, 4-6, 7-5 with a near-flawless serve-and-volley display that recalled the glory days of Australian tennis. En route to his date with the unseeded Rusedski, Rafter defeated World No. 2 Michael Chang and former World No. 1 Andre Agassi. Two of the Americans who were billed to play supporting roles to Sampras' star turn in the new 23,000-seat Arthur Ashe stadium court. Rafter knew the script, he just didn't follow it. "I always felt like I could lose," said the 13th seed, who opened his campaign with a straight-sets victory over Ukrainian Andrei Medvedev. He plowed through two more opponents without dropping a set before ending Agassi's run in the round of 16 with a four-set victory. Rafter, who was 0 for 5 in finals this year, was especially wary of Chang, who inherited the mantle of Open favourite after Sampras was summarily dismissed by Petr Korda the fourth round. "I thought Michael could have done it," Rafter said. "Obviously he can do it." But Chang, who reached the semi-finals via five-set wars with France's Cedric Pioline and Chile's Marcelo Rios, didn't do it. "It was my day," Rafter said. "It was my two weeks." Until Sunday, Rusedski could have said the same thing. The Canadian-born Briton, the first player from his adopted country to reach the U.S. Open final since Fred Perry in 1936, had never won a U.S. Open match in three previous attempts. He and Rafter set up the first Aussie-Brit Grand Slam final since Australian Jack Crawford defeated Perry for the 1935 Australian Open title. Their athleticism — and a record 143 mph serve from Rusedski — had the crowd of 21,000 on their feet in the best possible advertisement for the serve-and-volley game. "People always say to me, 'we enjoyed watching you play,'" Rafter said. "Hopefully they do enjoy watching that style of tennis. If we can get more people doing it, it is a lot of fun." Rusedski said the emergence of two first-time Grand Slam finalists wasn't really so astounding. By the time he and Rafter were the only two standing, French Open champion Gustavo Kuerten, World No. 3 Yevgeny Kafelnikov, Goran Ivanisevic and Thomas Muster were all on the scrapheap with Sampras and Chang. So were a slew of Spanish seeds led by No. 6 Alex Corretja, No. 7 Sergi Bruguera, and No. 8 Carlos Moya. "The depth of men's tennis today," Rusedski said by way of explanation. "Did anybody think Kuerten was going to win the French Open this year? Sixty-six in the world. "I think one through 20, any one of those 20 players can win on any occasion." In the women's final, Martina Hingis captured her third Grand Slam title of the year right on cue. The surprise was provided by her opponent Venus Williams, who reached the final of only her third Grand Slam tournament and will charge up the rankings from 66th to 27th. The 17-year-old Williams' success offered hope that she will be able to build a lasting rivalry with the 16-year-old Hingis, who has been virtually unchallenged in her rise to the top this year. The Open offered tantalizing glimpses of a some other teenagers, as 15-year-old Croatian Mirjana Lucic and Belarusian Olga Barabanschikova both made it to the third round, and Russian teen Anna Kournikova to the second. Hingis made it clear that she sees her fate entwined with theirs, more than with world No. 2 Monica Seles — a quarter-final loser — or former World No. 1 Steffi Graf, the 1995 and 1996 U.S. Open champion who was sidelined by injury. "I think you don't always have to talk about the past," Hingis said, "but about the future."

Havelange arrives in Amman Saturday

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — President of the International Football Federation (FIFA) Joao Havelange will arrive here on Saturday where he is expected to meet with His Majesty King Hussein, a spokesman of the Jordan Football Association (JFA) said Wednesday. Saleh Irsheidat, the JFA vice president, said Mr. Havelange's visit comes upon an invitation which was extended to him by His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah, the JFA president, during a meeting in Zurich in May. Dr. Irsheidat told the Jordan Times that Mr. Havelange's six-hour-long visit will focus on the cooperation between FIFA and the JFA. He added that Mr. Havelange, who is currently in Cairo to attend the U-17 World Cup, will be accompanied by three of his deputies and two Arab members of FIFA's executive committee. Dr. Irsheidat emphasised that the meeting of Mr. Havelange with King Hussein depends on the arrival of the U.S. secretary of state, Madeleine



Joao Havelange
Albright, who is currently visiting the region. News reports said that during Mr. Havelange's Middle East tour, the Brazilian national official is expected to travel to Beirut and the Gaza Strip where he will discuss with Palestinian officials FIFA's assistance to the newly-founded Palestinian Soccer Association. During his visit to Jordan, Mr. Havelange will meet with Prince Abdul-

Iah and discuss enhancing the relationship between the JFA and FIFA, Dr. Irsheidat said. Asked whether the two sides will discuss Jordan's chances to host international football tournaments, the JFA official said that it is premature to discuss this issue because "Jordan still needs more sports facilities" which will enable the Kingdom to host such events. Dr. Irsheidat said that four years ago, FIFA had approved financial assistance to Asian soccer associations, but conditioned this assistance with "presenting a well-defined programme in this regard." "The visit of Mr. Havelange to Jordan is an honour for the JFA and to Jordanian soccer, which has achieved a very good record on the Arab scene," said Dr. Irsheidat, referring to Jordan's gold medal win at the 8th Pan-Arab Games which were held in Lebanon last July.

British soccer corruption report completed

LONDON (AFP) — The long-awaited report of the Premier League's inquiry into so-called "bungs" — illegal payments to managers or club officials for the transfer of players — has finally been completed. After more than three years of work, the commission have now drafted their conclusions. The inquiry was set up by the Premier League following allegations made during the bitter court battle for control of Tottenham Hotspur between chairman Alan Sugar and his sacked chief executive, Terry Venables. Investigators went on the trail of a 50,000 pounds (about \$80,000) payment that went "missing" during the transfer of Teddy Sheringham from Nottingham Forest to Tottenham in 1992. With football still reeling from George Graham's admissions that he had received 240,000 pounds (about \$380,000) from Norwegian agent Rune Hauge following Arsenal's signings of John Jensen and Pal Lydersen, the League and the Football Association decided to take action. The report, which is expected to be published in the coming weeks, will detail the findings of the inquiry and recommend measures to prevent such payments in the future.

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GOREN BRIDGE
WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAN HIRSCH
PLAY OR DEFEND?
East-West vulnerable. South deals.
NORTH
♠ K 10 9 6 5 4
♥ K
♦ K J 10 5
♣ K 7
WEST
♠ A J 8 7 3 2
♥ 8 2
♦ 9 8
♣ 6 5
EAST
♠ Q
♥ 7 6 4
♦ A 8 7 4 3 2
♣ A J 4
SOUTH
♠ Void
♥ A Q J 10 9 5 3
♦ Q
♣ 10 9 8 3 2
The bidding:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♣ Pass 1♥ Pass
Opening lead: Ace of ♠
Study the diagram above. Would you rather declare or defend four hearts after the lead of the ace of spades?
Note that South has a four-heart opening bid at any vulnerability. The heart suit is a near-certainty to conclude six tricks and the five-card

Under the Patronage of HRH Princess Sumaya Bint Al-Hassan
Tradition comes alive at Kan Zaman Village
ArtiZaman & Bani Hamida
welcome you to the Bani Hamida Exhibition
"Rugs" Cushions "Runners" "Wallhangings" "Baskets"
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Starting Monday, 25/8 - Saturday, 20/9/97
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The exhibition is sponsored by
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'97 settler house sales in West Bank up 50%

TEL AVIV (R) — Sales of Jewish settler apartments in the occupied West Bank have risen by more than 50 per cent this year under Israeli leader Benjamin Netanyahu's right-wing government.

An adviser to Deputy Construction and Housing Minister Meir Porush said Wednesday the Haaretz newspaper was "more or less" correct to report sales were up 56 per cent in the first seven months of 1997 compared to the same period last year.

News of the sales emerged at the start of a Middle East peace-saving visit by U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. U.S. President Bill Clinton has called the settlements on land occupied by Israel since 1967 an "obstacle to peace."

Haaretz said the largest rise in West Bank home sales was among immigrants, whose purchases were up 84 per cent on the figures for the same period in 1996.

Under the terms of \$10 billion in U.S. loan guarantees Israel's dovish previous government won from the United States in 1992 to help settle immigrants from the former Soviet Union, Israel was not to direct immigrants to the occupied lands.

The newspaper said 1,560 apartments had been sold since the start of the year, most of them completed apartments standing empty for years. It said the rise was in sharp contrast to the trend in Israel where the number of mortgages has been dropping.

The housing ministry adviser, Moshe Elat, said the government was only forcing Jews to pay for apartments they had taken over since 1992 in defiance of the prior government that froze Jewish settlement expansion to accelerate peace moves.

"A lot of people broke into their apartments and began to renovate them themselves because the government decided to stop them in the middle of the process," Mr. Elat told Reuters.

"These are people who already lived there, so they are not new settlers. They are people who lived there but they didn't own their homes," he said.

The Likud-led government of Mr. Netanyahu reversed the settlement freeze imposed in 1992 by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and maintained by his successor Shimon Peres. Mr. Netanyahu enacted the change within weeks of taking office last June.

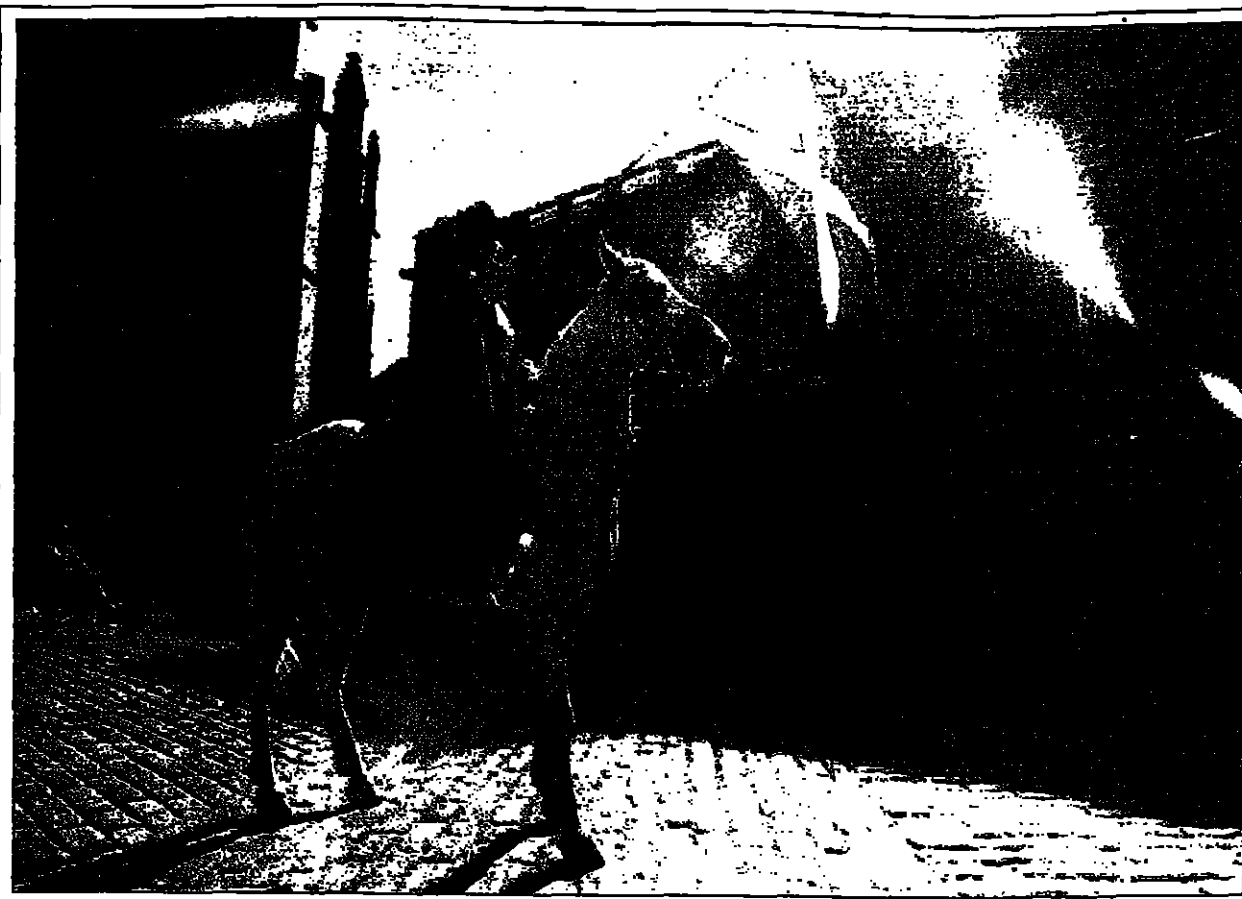
"Now the Likud government says to them: 'You live in these apartments, you have to buy them. Otherwise we'll have to throw you out.' Some of them already bought the apartments, some of them are negotiating," Mr. Elat said.

Likud backs Jewish settlement and opposes the policy of swapping occupied land for peace with the Palestinians backed by the Labour Party of both the late Rabin and Mr. Peres, who was defeated by Mr. Netanyahu in May elections.

Under Mr. Netanyahu, the West Bank has been designated a national priority area for Jewish settlers, entitling buyers to financial incentives, including assistance on mortgages, education and other subsidies.

The newspaper said that since 1988 some 17,600 mortgages had been granted in the West Bank, four per cent of the total mortgages granted over the period.

More than 130,000 Jews live in settlements scattered among some two million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Peace moves have been stuck over Jewish settlement expansion and bombings that have killed 20 Israelis since July.



SCOTLAND VOTES TOMORROW: A woman on a horse waving a Scottish saltire takes part in a re-enactment of the delivery of petitions in the 18th century, to Parliament square in Edinburgh calling for a Scottish Assembly, Wednesday. Scotland will tomorrow vote on whether they will have a Scottish Assembly with tax raising powers. The last Scottish parliament was in the year 1707 (Reuters photo)

Democracy and employment to top agenda of Inter-Parliamentary Union

CAIRO (AFP) — Parliamentarians from around the world begin a five-day conference here Thursday to discuss consolidating democracy and creating full employment to meet the challenges of world globalisation.

The 98th meeting of the Geneva-based Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), which will bring together around 1,500 parliamentarians from 138 countries, will be opened by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

The flags of the member countries, including Israel's Star of David and the Palestinian colours, have been raised across Cairo's main avenues, and the stalled Middle East peace process will be among the topics addressed here.

Conference speakers will include Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa, the

President of Egypt's People's Assembly, Ahmad Fathi Srour, and the director general of the U.N. office in Geneva, Vladimir Petrovsky.

The MPs, some of whom represent countries ruled by dictators, will discuss two key topics: ensuring lasting democracy by forging close links between parliament and the people, and employment under world globalisation, including such issues as the effects of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) on developing countries.

Delegates will also endorse an "international declaration on democracy" aimed at guaranteeing freedom of elections and human rights and on governments' responsibility to achieve peace and stability for their people, Mr. Srour said.

The peace process will be at the centre of talks at a committee meeting attended by delegates from Jordan, Israel, Egypt and the Palestinian National Authority.

Three Israeli MPs arrived Tuesday in Cairo to attend the conference.

Kuwait has proposed talks on ways of keeping the Middle East free of nuclear weapons while Iraq wants fellow IPU members to support its sovereignty.

Libya, which has also been hit by international sanctions over its alleged involvement in the blowing up of a U.S. passenger plane over Lockerbie, Scotland, has proposed a debate on the embargo imposed on it.

Australia has proposed talks to focus on the sexual exploitation of children while Guatemala submitted a request for discussions on the deadly Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) virus.

A statement from the Geneva-based IPU said that delegates will also address issues relating to child labour and the situation of migrants, security and cooperation in the Mediterranean, the Cyprus problem and international humanitarian law.

A new IPU president will be elected on closing day to replace Srour, whose three-year non-renewable term expires.

Three candidates are vying for the post: Purno Agitok Sangma, speaker of India's lower house of parliament, Eduardo Menem, president of the Argentine Senate and Spanish MP Miguel Angel Martinez.

The IPU is also expected to admit Fiji and restore the membership of Belarus, and Arab groups are expected to press for full membership for the Palestinian National Council.

Jewish extremist pleads not guilty to hanging pig posters

TEL AVIV (AP) — The Jewish extremist who incensed Muslims by drawing posters depicting the Prophet Mohammad as a pig pleaded not guilty Wednesday, and her lawyer charged that the Palestinians themselves copied the poster to magnify its effect.

Tatiana Susskind, 27, is charged with supporting a terrorist organisation, insulting religious feelings, endangering a public transportation route and defacing public property.

Although Susskind admits to drawing the posters, "we're saying that she did not put up the posters in Hebron" as has been widely reported, said

Defence Attorney Sean Kasper. "No one has ever proved that they were hung up."

He also said that although official psychiatric tests indicated Susskind is sane, a private psychological evaluation showed she "lacked control over her actions" on the day she drew the posters, and she was therefore not responsible.

"I think it is going to be a war between the state psychiatrists and the private psychologists," Mr. Kasper said.

Mr. Kasper said Susskind was found in the Israeli-controlled part of the city with several copies of the poster in her hand, but

insisted that "the people who multiplied these posters were from the Palestinian [National] Authority."

Susskind, an art school dropout and supporter of the outlawed anti-Arab Kach movement, was arrested in June.

Her action incited riots in Hebron and were condemned throughout the Muslim world.

She was released last month on \$14,000 bail and placed under house arrest. There have also been claims in Israel that the accusations against Susskind amount to an attempt to restrict free speech.

Bombing kills 2, injures 5 in Algeria — press report

ALGIERS (AFP) — Two people were killed and five were injured when a bomb exploded in an abandoned house in a village just south of the Algerian capital Algiers, Al Watan daily reported Wednesday.

The bomb exploded Tuesday as the owner of the house and members of his family were going back to visit the building.

The village is close to Rais, just outside Algiers, the scene last month of the country's worst mass slaying since the five-year confrontation between security forces and Islamists began.

That massacre, which left 98 dead according to an official count and more than 200 according to area residents, was part of a wave of massacres that has swept the country this year.

The outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) launched an appeal from the office of its overseas executive in Bonn for "immediate resistance" to the government, which it accused of colluding in the massacres.

It said Algerians were being abandoned to their fate, and urged them to defend themselves.

Also Tuesday, in London, a top FIS official, Mohamed Dneidni, warned of a military coup "in the coming days," urged western nations to denounce the bloodshed and called for an international inquiry into the massacres.

"We reaffirm that the regime is committing these massacres to prepare the way for a state of emergency and for army intervention in the capital," Mr. Dneidni said.

Former French FM urges U.S. to reexamine policy on Israel

PARIS (AFP) — Former French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette urged Washington to reexamine its Middle East policy, saying the spectre of war was rearing up again and Washington should not remain Israel's "unconditional" ally, in an interview published Thursday.

"Frankly, I fear that the spectre of war is on the horizon" in the Middle East, he was quoted as saying in the Arabic language daily Al Hayat.

Stressing that the "key to

the door of peace lies in Israel in the office of the Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu," Mr. De Charette said "that another key lies in Washington."

"As long as the Americans continue a strategy under which they are the privileged and unconditional ally of the Israeli government, whatever it may be or whatever it does, then the United States is no longer an element in peace."

Mr. Charette said he hoped the trip by U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to

Israel should answer whether "the United States is ready to pressure Israel so it has a better perception of things."

Mr. De Charette was the main architect of a cease-fire in south Lebanon after the Israeli offensive in the spring of 1996.

Ms. Albright arrived in Israel on Wednesday at the start of a Middle East tour aimed at defusing the crisis which has gripped the U.S.-sponsored peace process for the last six months.

Middle Eastern businessman focus of U.S. campaign probe

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Citing Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) information, a Senate panel Tuesday indicated that a Lebanese businessman may have been granted a meeting with President Bill Clinton in exchange for campaign contributions.

The allegations, arising from the panel's look into illegal campaign fund-raising, are helping shed light on the elaborate steps the White House took last year to ensure Clinton's reelection.

At the centre of the debate Tuesday was Roger Tamraz, a 57-year-old Lebanese-born businessman who poured nearly \$300,000 into Democratic Party coffers in 1995 and 1996.

Republicans say his goal was to get Mr. Clinton's support for an ambitious plan to build an oil pipeline between the Caspian Sea and Turkey.

Initially, the White House had shut out Mr. Tamraz after the National Security Council (NSC) informed Vice President Al Gore that Mr. Tamraz "has a history of making false claims" and was seeking to use his White House ties to influence foreign governments, Turkey in particular.

Mr. Tamraz, whom the Lebanese government has charged with embezzling \$300 million, nevertheless was invited to a Christmas event at the White House, had coffee with the president and attended, in the president's company, a screening of the Hollywood movie "Independence Day."

At Tuesday's hearing, Republican senators introduced written testimony by a CIA employee who reportedly was contacted by the former head of the Democratic National Committee, Don Fowler, in 1995.

Mr. Fowler allegedly asked the CIA employee to persuade the NSC to change its mind about Mr. Tamraz.

Testifying Tuesday, Mr. Fowler said he does not remember contacting the CIA employee, identified only as "Bob."

However, he

acknowledged, having met with Mr. Tamraz shortly after he was initially barred from the White House.

According to Mr. Tamraz, cited Tuesday by the Washington Post newspaper, two other high-level Democratic Party officials said they would do everything they could to lobby the White House on his behalf.

Mr. Fowler conceded that the Democratic Party had made fundraising "mistakes" but said the party never tried to skirt the law.

"Those mistakes were of process, not intent," he said. "No one at the White House, not the president, nor the vice-president, suggested that we cut corners" with campaign finance rules. Without directly criticising White House officials, Mr. Fowler played an important role in party fundraising. The party's financial office seemed to have an independent relationship with the White House and with Harold Ickes, Mr. Fowler said.



Jackson may celebrate 40th birthday in Poland

WARSAW (AFP) — U.S. pop star Michael Jackson may celebrate his 40th birthday next year in a Polish manor, President of the World Trade Center Warsaw Jacques Toulou said Wednesday, quoted by the Super Express mass-circulation newspaper. Polish authorities are drawing up a list of small palaces and manors where the superstar can blow out his forty candles on August 29, 1998.

Bardot set for new racism hearing

PARIS (AFP) — Former film star Brigitte Bardot has been summoned to appear in court in December accused of making racist comments, the second time she has faced such charges, informed sources said Tuesday. Bardot, a militant animal rights campaigner, appeared in court last December over comments in April 1996 criticising the Muslim practice of ritually killing sheep. The court let her off citing freedom of expression.

Sardinian tourist jailed for stealing Diana teddy bear tribute

LONDON (AFP) — A London court on Wednesday jailed for a week a Sardinian tourist who stole a teddy bear — he intended to give to his girlfriend — from among tributes to Diana, Princess of Wales. Fabio Piras took the bear left among the thousands of flowers and other tributes at Saint James's Palace, London, on Tuesday, which happened to be his 20th birthday. He told London magistrates that he took the toy and condolence card attached to it, as a present for his girlfriend.

People who abuse animals also hurt people

WASHINGTON (R) — People who abuse animals are often likely to assault or abuse other people as well, according to a survey conducted in the United States and published on Tuesday. The survey, commissioned by the Humane Society of the United States, found that nearly 30 per cent of all incidents involving cruelty to animals also involved violent crimes against people. It surveyed law enforcement agencies, local animal care agencies and media reports from across the country between September 1996 and the end of August this year.

New Delhi to scrap old vehicles to check pollution

NEW DELHI (AFP) — The New Delhi administration plans to ban people driving commercial vehicles that are more than 15 years old in the city in a bid to check stifling pollution, it was announced Wednesday. New Delhi Transport Minister Rajendra Gupta said the ban would cover thousands of buses, taxis and scooter-rickshaws, which are the chief mode of public transport in the Indian capital. "Pollution is the number one problem in Delhi," Gupta said.

Concert pays tribute to Russian pianist Sviatoslav Richter

MOSCOW (AFP) — Leading Russian musicians and hundreds of fans paid tribute to the late Russian pianist Sviatoslav Richter, who died on August 1, at a concert on Tuesday night. Mezzo-soprano Arkhipova, cellist Natalia Gurnam, violinist Yuri Bashmet and conductor Yevgeny Kolobov, all major names in the music world, laid flowers on the stage of the Conservatory before performing in his honour.



ONE OF TWO KNOWN TO EXIST: Christie's director of London wine department, Paul Bowker, presents a jerooboam of Mouton Rothschild 1945, Wednesday, as part of a private wine cellar coming up for auction next week. The jerooboam, which is equal to six regular bottles or five litres, is the most expensive single bottle and is expected to realise a sale price of between 30,000-40,000 pounds sterling. There are only two known jerooboams of this vintage in the world (Reuters photo)

Hamas says Israel killed

Combined agency dispatches

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